History of the Cross

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The Lamb in the midst of the
throne

THE

LAMB IN THE MIDST OF THE THRONE:

OR,

THE HISTORY OF THE CROSS.

"Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." John i: 59. "And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the Throne . . . stood a Lamb, as it had been slain." Rev. v: 6. "And the Lamb is the Light thereof." Rev. xxi: 23.

BY JAMES M. SHERWOOD.

NEW YORK:
FUNK & WAGNALLS.

1883.

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PREFACE.

Some thoughts which I have expressed in my Prefatory Observations, would perhaps have found a more fitting place in the Preface. Little remains that needs to be said here, or that would be likely to cast any additional light on the work, which I have ventured to send forth to the world. I have elsewhere acknowledged my obligations to various distinguished authors, to whom I have referred, from some of whom I have made liberal citations.

The purpose which I have herein carried out, has been in my mind for many years; and yet, not until now have I had the resolution to prepare the work for the press, and put my thoughts in permanent form before the public. And even now the impelling motive is not ambition to appear in the rôle of an author, and especially in connection with a Theme so transcendent in importance and grandeur. I instinctively shrink from the responsibility and publicity of such a step; and nothing could have overcome the feeling save a sense of duty, and the strong conviction, that the main subject discussed in these pages is specially timely, and that the related and subordinate themes, briefly passed in review, are of current interest, and deserve candid and serious consideration by all the friends of Truth and revealed Religion, and particularly by all who exercise the office of the Christian Ministry.

While I have been unable for many years past to engage in the active duties of the ministerial office: first, by reason of physical inability, and, secondly, because no longer young in years; yet my heart has ever been in the work; and I have continued at all times to feel the deepest interest in whatever pertained to the sacred calling, and to study carefully and note the progress and changes of modern thought in their bearings on the progress and ultimate triumph of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. Next to the Pulpit, I regard the Press as the leading power in the world at the present time; and I have sought, as best I could in past years, to serve my Divine Master through this instrumentality; and I now reverently lay this contribution, imperfect as it is, upon the altar of Christian sacrifice; consecrating it to Him whose service is the highest honor to which man or angel can aspire, and whose reward is life everlasting.

Having been for many years editorially connected with our periodical religious press, in connection with various Reviews and Magazines, I have necessarily been brought into contact with writers of all grades and schools, and with almost every phase of human thought, especially of a theological and religious character; and hence I have been compelled to exercise the critic's function extensively and habitually. And, it may be, that the habit, thus acquired, has sometimes carried me too far in my criticisms of books, and authors, and preachers, as they occur in the work. But I have not turned aside from my one main purpose, in order to do this; and I have exercised the delicate and responsible liberty only when fidelity to the truth seemed to me to demand and justify it. I believe that fair and intelligent criticism, however seemingly severe, benefits, rather than injures, an author and his productions. But, if it were otherwise, a writer's duty to his own honest convictions, and his responsibility to the public, leave him no

choice in the matter. At the same time, my long editorial life has made me extensively acquainted with the ministers of this country, of various denominations, and has drawn me toward them in warm sympathy. I have been brought into intimate relations with multitudes of them, both by personal intercourse, and by correspondence, and have come to understand their needs, and trials, and besetments, and hinderances, and aspirations. And hence I have had them, as a class, continually in my mind, in what I have written; and I have striven, earnestly and prayerfully, while dwelling on defects and shortcomings, to speak to these, my brethren in the Lord, encouraging words and suggest the sources of power, out of the fullness of brotherly love and sympathy. And if I could but know that what I have herein written shall, in the way of instruction, or suggestion, or mental or spiritual quickening, give any fresh strength, or aspiration, or encouragement, to any considerable number of the toilers in the arduous and responsible calling of the Gospel Ministry, I should feel amply rewarded, even in the face of any amount of adverse criticism.

With the exception of a comparatively few pages, the entire work has been written within a few past months, and from a fresh and careful survey of the whole subject. I did, many years ago, prepare and preach a series of sermons on the Redemptive work of Christ, which embodied many of the leading thoughts embraced in the present discussion. But they were all thrown aside, and the entire work here presented was written and arranged without reference to them.

The impression made by reading the introductory chapters will most likely be, that I have drawn a very sombre picture of the present condition and tendencies of things. I could not do justice to my convictions and do otherwise. But this impression, I think, will be, in a measure, relieved, before the reading is finished. Viewing the subject from the *human*

side, there is abundant occasion for fear, and gloom, and almost despair, in reference to the future of Christianity, and of human Society. But, contemplated from the *Divine* side, in the light of God's purpose, and promise, and past accomplishments, and the ultimate end of Redemption, all darkness vanishes, and assured hope takes possession of the soul.

A word as to the title. I dislike fancy titles, or titles likely to entrap the public. I have sought a name simply descriptive of the character of the work. The reader will not fairly see its appropriateness, or appreciate its amazing theological and spiritual significance, unless he studies it in the light of Scripture. John the Baptist voiced all the Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah, and the significance of the whole Jewish typical dispensation, when, "seeing Jesus coming unto him he saith, Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world!" And in the Apocalyptic vision of the future, as seen by the beloved apostle of the Christian economy, appeared a "Throne set in heaven," and in the midst of it a "Lamb as it had been slain," and He alone was "found worthy to open the book, and loose the seven seals thereof." The Lamb of atonement, in the centre of all power, revealing the history of the universe to an innumerable company of angels, and saints redeemed, who respond with a loud voice, saying, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing."

May the blessing of the Great Head of the Church attend this humble testimony of his servant, and cause it to redound to his own glory.

James M. Sherwood.

Brooklyn, January 1, 1883.
35 McDonough Place.

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THE

LAMB IN THE MIDST OF THE THRONE.

CHAPTER I.

PREFATORY OBSERVATIONS.

SECTION I.

THE SCOPE AND OBJECT OF THE WORK.

It is not my purpose in this work to state or to defend formally the doctrines of Divine Revelation. This has already been done ably and frequently by some of the best minds of the ages past. Nor do I propose a treatise on biblical exegesis, or homiletics, or Christian experience, or on the practical duties of Christianity. A multitude of books in each and all of these departments have been given to the public, and many of them are of great excellence, and leave little or nothing to be said.

I shall assume, therefore, the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures, and the truth of the several doctrines embraced in what is known as the Christian System – such as the trinity, the mediation and incarnation of Christ, the atonement, in its broadest scope, human depravity, salvation by faith alone, the new birth, the work of the Holy Spirit, the resurrection from the dead, the final judgment, and the rewards, and punishments of the future state. Nor shall I aim to give any

new, or *novel* interpretation to any one of these received doctrines, or to the system of revealed truth as a whole. I am content with the commonly accepted formularies of the evangelical Church, especially the Presbyterian branch of it, to which I belong. Not because I consider these historical standards *perfect*, and therefore not susceptible of any improvement; but simply because I regard them as substantially in accord with the Word of God, and the nearest approach to perfection to which it is practicable to bring any human formulary of doctrine.

Hence, my purpose is narrowed down to a *single point*, and that a very simple one. And yet that purpose is broad enough, and radical enough, to take in all knowledge, all attainment, all existence. The full scope of it embraces all truth, all worlds, all dispensations, all economies, all ages past, and the eternity to come. I desire to take my stand as a Christian believer and preacher of the Gospel—as near as possible to where the apostle John stood, and viewed "the Lamb of God" in the midst of the Heavenly Throne, with the "Book" of Redemption in his hand, which none but He was found "able to open," Rev. 5; to have that comprehension of the person, and character, and atoning work of Christ, which John the Baptist had, when he exclaimed, as "he saw Jesus coming unto him, Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world," John 1: 29; to dwell on the wonders of the Cross, as a sacrificial offering for sin, as an expression of God's infinite abhorrence of moral evil, and love for the children of men, as the one reconciling power in a discordant, warring universe, as the centre of all redeeming influence, all spiritual life, and the crowning work of the Mediatorial Kingdom; and to trace the onward flow of this mighty stream of grace down through the ages, and beyond the resurrection day. I would gladly do something to elevate the *Cross* to the place it held in the mind of Paul, who, with all his erudition, and abilities, and opportunities to gain fame, and earthly rewards, would glory in nothing save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ; to the place it held in the primitive Church, when they "joyfully took the spoiling of their goods, knowing that they have in heaven a better, and an en-

during substance," Heb. 10: 34. I would remind the Church —her ministers, elders, and members generally—that she can never rationally expect to enter upon her promised Millennium, until there first come a widespread, deep, and all-powerful *revival of the power of Christ* in His Church. The power of his *death*, crucifying his people to sin, and earthly ambitions, and making them willing to "fellowship his sufferings, being made conformable to his death;" the power of His *resurrection*, quickening them into newness of life, raising them above the dominion of things temporal, and visible, and inspiring them with such visions of the heavenly glory as that all else shall appear mean, and nothing worth.

There has been so much to *obscure* the lustre of that One "only name given under heaven among men whereby we can be saved, the name Christ Jesus," that it does not shine forth in our time as the "Sun of Righteousness," before a sin-darkened world. There is so much in these days to divert preachers from the *one theme*—salvation from sin and death by the blood of Christ—that it needs an angel's trumpet to sound it out over the land, and the world, and electrify every pulpit, and every pew. The strong currents of worldliness, and skepticism, and infidelity, and materialism, which are sweeping through the world, and alas! through the Church also, are already dashing madly against the *foundations*—the foundations not only of religious faith, and religious institutions, but of the State as well, the family constitution, the peace, and order of society. And the conservers of religion, and morality, and social purity, and public welfare, cannot look too soon to these foundations, nor watch against their overthrow with too jealous a vigilance.

My purpose, therefore, will be gained, if I can, with God's blessing on my humble endeavor, broaden in any measure the views, quicken in any measure the zeal, deepen in any measure the interest, and intensify in any degree the desires, and prayers of those who are "looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Titus 2: 13, 14.

The great Newton, as he himself records it, "held it as his highest glory, not simply that he had gone farther than any other man in his researches, and enlarged the boundaries of his knowledge, but to *have made the evidence of God's existence, and the dispensations of his power and wisdom better known by men.*" Noble sentiment! An ambition thus consecrated, is a benediction to the world. And is there any higher, or truer ambition opened, to man or angel, than the desire and purpose to make JESUS CHRIST, who is "the Way, the Truth and the Life," *better known* to an unappreciative, perishing race; to a generation of excited men and women, who are eagerly crying out, on every side, "Who will show us any good?" The sum of all *good*, the sum of all human *need*, is CHRIST. Not the Christ of the Schoolmen, not the Christ of Polemical Theology, not the Christ of a dead Orthodoxy, not the Christ of Ritualism, not the Christ of History, or the Christ of the modern Pulpit even; but the Christ of the *New Testament;* the Christ of Paul, and Peter, and John, and of the primitive Church: the Christ that speaks, and intercedes, and promises, and weeps in his own Divine teachings, as they came forth fresh, and in overflowing fullness from his blessed lips, and loving heart, and found their fitting and sublime illustration and confirmation in his own life, and death, and resurrection.

I have no desire whatever, even if I had the ability, to discover any *new* truth, proclaim any *new* doctrine, or startle the public by *novel* theories, or *sensational* utterances. But I do desire in these pages, at least to make the attempt, to invest the "old" doctrines, the "old" facts, the "old" methods—the unchanging and eternal verities of Christian Truth, and the Christian Life, as they are plainly revealed to us in the Scriptures, and accepted by all evangelical denominations—to invest them with *fresh interest* in the minds of at least the younger part of the ministry, and our theological students. I do aspire—God forgive me, if I have "run without being sent"—to present to such the "old theme," to which their talents, and acquisitions, and lives, have all been consecrated—in some of its broader relations and aspects, and diviner glories, than it is wont to be contemplated; to the end

that they may more diligently study it, more thoroughly comprehend it, more deeply feel its significance and power, more earnestly and effectively preach it, and more worthily adorn its doctrines by holy and consecrated lives. "Paul the aged," wrote, as he would not have written in his youth, and, having attained to "three score years and ten," the writer uses a plainness of speech, and a direct form of address often, which, otherwise, he would not have ventured to use.

Had my ambition been personal *reputation* I should have given a very different cast to the book. I should have narrowed its scope: given it unity, which now it lacks: compacted the argument: clothed it in a style less diffuse and ornate: and traversed a much narrower field of thought. No reader of the book will see its literary defects half as clearly as the author sees them. Criticism of books has been no small part of the labor of thirty years past of my life; and I have poorly improved my opportunities, if I can be blind to the faults and short-comings of my own creation. And yet, conscious of all this, I have the boldness to send it forth, and to challenge criticism; expecting it, I shall be in no wise disturbed by it. My one wish—the one purpose which has shaped it, and given tone and expression to it—is to make it USEFUL, SUGGESTIVE, a mentally quickening force. Not to the scholar, the philosopher, the professor, the "thoroughly furnished" and accomplished divine—that I could scarcely expect, that end I have not sought—but to the "average" preacher, to the student of sacred literature, just entering on his life's professional work, or who is looking forward to it with solicitude; and also to some among the "laity" (many, I hope), who in their secret hearts "sigh and cry" over the existing state of things, both in the ministry, and in the church, and in the world, and are praying and waiting for something better—for "deliverance to arise" from some quarter.

And, as I cannot preach or write, without being *practical*, the reader must not be surprised, or offended, if he finds himself sometimes addressed in person; "preached" to, and the truth applied, as it is unfolded, to his own needs; and the claims of the divine Saviour pressed upon him, with plainness and urgency of speech. No end short of actual "conversion,"

"edification," "sanctification," of the individual soul, is worth the seeking. That attained, it matters little what else fails, either as it respects the writer or the reader.

SECTION II.

THE WRITINGS OF PRESIDENT EDWARDS.

It is not unlikely that some of the views advanced in this volume will be severely criticised as fanciful, or extravagant, or speculative, having no foundation in reason, deriving no support from the Scriptures, and no sanction from the writings of the great expounders of Christian thought. Hence I deem it proper, at the outset of the discussion, in order to forestall any unjust criticism on this score, to state that I lay claim to nothing *new* or *novel* in the book, as it respects the main body of it, with the exception of the views, diffidently and briefly expressed, on a single subject, and that one not in the least essential to the integrity or main design of the work.

I might abundantly confirm this statement by citations from the writings of a great number of eminent scholars and divines who, at different times and with greater or less fullness, have given their views to the world. I shall, however, confine my references mainly to a select few, all of them able and distinguished writers, some American and others English, whose writings are well known in both hemispheres, and have been received with very general favor. I refer to *the e* more particularly, and cite from their published works, in illustration and confirmation of some of the views herein expressed, because I have personally derived great pleasure and profit, and experienced enlargement of mind as to the extent, relations, and moral grandeur of the work of redemption wrought out in the believer and in the moral kingdom of God, by familiarity with their writings. These authors are the Rev. Thomas W. Jenkyn,* Rev. John Harris, D.D., Horace Bushnell, D.D.,

* 1. The Extent of the Atonement, in its Relation to God and the Universe. By Thomas W. Jenkyn. With an introduction by Rev.

THOMAS H. SKINNER, D.D., and the world-renowned name which stands at the head of this section.

PRESIDENT EDWARDS certainly, to say nothing of these other eminent names, will not be charged with rashness, or presumption, or extravagance, whatever may be said of the author of this unpretending volume. He meditated on the wondrous theme of REDEMPTION, and studied it in all its aspects, facts, principles and relations, in the light of Scripture, and reason, and sacred history, more comprehensively and exhaustively, probably, than any man of his day, or of any age. He has written on it, likewise, more grandly than any other writer since Paul penned the sublime and inspired epistles to the Ephesian and Philippian churches—more intelligently and argumentatively than any other uninspired man. So eminent and competent a critic as DR. MCCOSH denominates him "a philosophic divine whose intellectual and spiritual perception in theological subjects appears to us to approach nearer the angelic than has been the attainment in any other in these latter days." * His *History of the Work of Redemption* is truly a masterpiece of sacred thought and Scripture argument, on this theme—enough of itself to immortalize any author. Some of his positions are seemingly bold and radical, sweeping in their scope, and all-comprehensive in their application. Still, they are presented in a light so clear and convincing, and are so

Daniel L. Carroll, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Brooklyn, N. Y. From the London edition. Boston: Crocker & Brewster; New York: Leavitt, Lord & Co., 1835. 12mo, pp. XV, 334.

2. The Great Commission. By the Rev. John Harris, D.D., President of Cheshunt College, author of "Mammon," "The Great Teacher," etc. With an introductory essay by William R. Williams, D.D., pastor of the Amity Street Church, New York. 12mo, pp. XLVI, 484. Boston: Gould, Kendall & Lincoln, 1842.

3. The Works of President Edwards, with a Memoir of His Life. By Sereno E. Dwight. In ten volumes, 8vo. New York: G. C. & H. Carvill, 1830.

4. Nature and the Supernatural, as Together Constituting the One System of God. By Horace Bushnell, D.D. 8vo. Charles Scribner, 1860.

5. Discussions in Theology. By Thomas H. Skinner, D.D. 12mo. New York: A. D. F. Randolph, 1868.

* The Divine Government, Physical and Moral, p. 157.

strongly fortified by Scripture quotations at every point, that they cannot be gainsayed or overthrown.

It is not too much to affirm that the views of President Edwards, as preached in sermons, and scattered over the world by means of the press, have essentially modified, if not changed, the course of religious thought throughout the Church. The language of his biographer is not overwrought: "He has unfolded a system of the divine moral government so new, so clear, so full, that, while at its first disclosure it needed no aid from its friends and feared none from its enemies, it has at length constrained a reluctant world to bow in homage to its truth."

And yet there is solid ground for the apprehension that the writings of this acknowledged "master in Israel"—this profound theologian and logician, this almost unequaled preacher and expounder of "the great mystery of godliness," in the light of inspired teaching—have fallen into general disuse; are little, if at all, studied, or appreciated, by the ministers and theological students of the present day. Certainly, it may be affirmed confidently, that the preaching of the day, and especially what is called the *popular* types of it, affords but slight evidence, if any at all, of familiarity with his matchless discussions of pulpit doctrines and themes, and little appreciation of the eminent service he rendered, both by his tongue and pen, to the cause of Christian truth.

And what is true of the modern *Pulpit* is also, and equally true, of our popular current religious *Literature*. You search it in vain, whatever be its form, or subject, or source, or purpose, for the *Edwardean* type of independent thinking, and reasoning, and applying the Word of God, without fear or trembling, without timidity or reserve, without equivocation or compromise, without regard to fastidious tastes and æsthetical culture, without any drawing back from logical conclusions and Scripture statements, however awful, or any attempt to soften down the Divine severities. "Rooted and grounded" in the deep soil of revealed, inspired truth, with a soul oppressed with the responsibilities of "the great commission" he bore from the risen Lord and Saviour, with a heart fed on "the strong meat" of the Word, and with the tremendous scenes of the judgment

—"Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" *—ever before his mind—he studied, and wrote, and preached, and accomplished his grand mission. Both the pulpit and the literature of the Church, in these days, reflect far more of the effects of German Rationalistic and speculative thought, and of current questions of a semi-secular cast—questions relating to politics, to sociology, to political economy, to science, to "evolution" and "development" theories—than they do of the consecrated genius, erudition, and masterly intellect of JONATHAN EDWARDS —one of the choicest gifts God ever bestowed upon the Church in modern times.

There is more sound and intelligent theology, more biblical language and thought, more of the real pith and marrow of the Gospel, and more of the inner life of genuine Christian experience, in one of the "sermons," or grand "dissertations," or "treatises," of this rich old divine, than you can fish out of a hundred "popular" sermons or essays which are now preached, or out of whole libraries of our diluted and highly-flavored religious literature, so-called.

* The title of one of his sermons preached at Enfield, Conn., from the text, "Their feet shall slide in due time,"—probably the most fearful sermon, taking into view the doctrine preached, and the manner of the preacher, that ever fell from human lips, if we except the sermon of Peter on the Day of Pentecost. The immediate effects of it, also, on a people "usually listless and indifferent" were most extraordinary. Before it was ended they were bowed down in agony and terror. "There was such a breathing of distress and weeping that the preacher was obliged to speak to the people and desire silence, that he might be heard. It was the cause of an immediate and general revival of religion throughout the place." One person who heard him preach on the Judgment testifies, that "so vivid and solemn was the impression made on his own mind, that he fully supposed that as soon as Mr. Edwards should close his discourse the Judge would descend and the final separation take place." And yet he was not an orator. "In the pulpit he generally held his little MS. volume in his left hand, the elbow resting on the cushion or the Bible, his right hand raised but to turn the leaves, and his person almost motionless. Yet such was the power of his sincerity, of his solemnity, and of his logic, that he wrought results not surpassed even by the oratory of Whitefield." "His first sermon at Princeton was upwards of two hours in the delivery, but it so enchained the audience that they were unconscious of the lapse of time, and surprised that it closed so soon." Vol. I, pp. 139, 577.

Such serious and widespread departures from the old Puritan standards of Calvinistic doctrines as are now painfully manifest in New England,* as well as all over the American Church, among scholars, and writers, and preachers, and intelligent laymen, had never occurred, had the name and writings of this gifted man of God continued to hold that place in public estimation, in the minds of ministers and theological students, in our colleges, and literature, which were once proudly accorded to them, and to which their real worth pre-eminently entitles them in this, and in every age of the Church militant.

How shall we *account* for the admitted fact that the influence of such an incomparable thinker, and preacher, and writer has so greatly waned as to be little more than "historical?" It indicates too plainly that a sad and very great *change* has come over the tastes and views, and habits, and modes, and life of the ministry, and of the Church, and of society at large. And the *philosophy* of the transformation is equally plain. It is *not* found in the fact that the preachers, and philosophers, and writers, and spiritual guides of the world have, in these latter days, *outgrown* the colossal and highly-endowed mind of Jonathan Edwards; have attained to a higher knowledge of revealed truth, to a truer and profounder Christian philosophy, to a deeper and broader experience in the Divine life, and to a grander power and skill in unfolding, elucidating, and applying the fundamental principles of God's moral government, as set forth in his "History of the Work of Redemption." †

No; he is as *capable* of teaching the *present* generation of

* The attempt recently made to fill the vacant chair at Andover, so long and so honorably occupied by one who has left the impress of his moulding genius and gifts on a whole generation of thinkers and preachers, is an illustration in point. This noted case has served one useful purpose at least, and that is, to open the eyes of many to the actual state of things as they exist to-day in the theological world; to mark the progress which "liberal" Christianity has made even in evangelical folds in the present generation; and to emphasize the necessity of doctrinal "standards," and a firm and conscientious adherence to them, on the part of those who would conserve the faith of our fathers—"the faith once delivered to the saints" by divine authority.

† It must ever be matter of profound regret that he did not live to carry out his purpose in relation to enlarging and completing this

preachers, students of theology, and Christian philosophers and educators, as he was the generation in which he lived. He towers to-day, both intellectually and spiritually—as preacher, teacher, biblical expounder, and master of the science of Christian feeling and doctrine—far above any man that the present age has as yet produced, or is likely to produce. To *whom* will you compare him among all our present theological writers and preachers? Where can his equal, as a whole, be found? Who among the mighty might not reverently sit at his feet and learn? Who can answer or refute him, or show a more excellent way? Has his "Freedom of the Will" been overthrown by one of all the scores of writers who have attempted it? Who has ever successfully combated the power-

work, as outlined by him in his letter to the trustees of Nassau Hall:

"I have had on my mind and heart (which I long ago began, not with any view to publication,) a great work, which I call a *History of the Work of Redemption*, a body of divinity in an entire new method, being thrown into the form of a history; considering the affairs of Christian Theology, as the whole of it, in each part, stands in reference to the great work of redemption by Jesus Christ, which I suppose to be, of all others, the grand design of God, and the *summum* and *ult mum* of all the divine operations and decrees, particularly considering all parts of the grand scheme in their historical order. The order of their existence, or their being brought forth to view, in the course of divine dispensations, or the wonderful series of successive acts and events, beginning from eternity, and descending from thence to the great work and successive dispensations of the infinitely wise God, in time, considering the chief events coming to pass in the Church of God, and revolutions in the world of mankind, affecting the state of the Church and the affair of redemption, which we have an account of in history or prophecy, till at last we come to the general resurrection, last judgment, and consummation of all things, when it shall be said, *It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End*—concluding my work with the consideration of that perfect state of things which shall be finally settled to last for eternity. This history will be carried on with regard to all three worlds—heaven, earth, and hell; considering the connected, successive events and alternations in each, so far as the Scriptures give any light; introducing all parts of divinity in that order which is most Scriptural and most natural; a method which appears to me the most beautiful and entertaining, wherein every divine doctrine will appear to the greatest advantage, in the brightest light, in the most striking manner, shewing the admirable contexture and harmony of the whole." Vol. I, pp. 569, 570.

ful reasonings, and startling positions, and glorious conclusions of his immortal "History of the Work of Redemption?" What modern treatise on experimental religion can compare, in depth of thought, in masterly analyses, in nice discriminations, in irresistible moral conclusions, with his "Treatise on the Religious Affections?" Where can you find the leading doctrines of the Christian system—"Justification by Faith," the supreme Deity and the "Unchangeableness of Christ," the nature and relations of the Atonement, "The Justice of God in the Damnation of Sinners," the existence and destiny of angels, the agency and power of the Devil, the last Judgment, and the eternal punishment of the wicked—set forth in language so clear, and forcible, and Scriptural, and enforced by arguments so cogent, and weighty, and unanswerable, as in the writings of this great man? Would to God that the mantle of this Elijah might descend upon some Elisha of our day, in the pulpit, or in some school of the prophets! Would that by some agency or instrumentality, the wondrous power of his reasoning, his penetrating insight into the mysteries of Christ's kingdom, his sturdy loyalty to the truth, and his profound all-penetrating reverence for God's Word, might be *felt*, and *deeply* felt, on this flippant, skeptical, superficial, "cultured," and materialistic generation! Would that the heavy, red-hot bolts, which he forged by his giant intellect and great heart, and hurled with such prodigious effect against the strongholds of error and sin in the kingdom of Satan, in his own age and immediate sphere of life, might be utilized again and turned against "the enemy of all righteousness," in a day when "the powers of darkness" seem ready to prevail!

The writer is free to confess that while he had the complete published works of Edwards in his library, in the early period of his ministry, yet he read them only partially and superficially until a late period in life. Thirty years ago he prepared, and preached to his people, a series of sermons on Christ's redemptive work, which greatly interested both the preacher and the hearers; but he was then really ignorant of the inexhaustible mine of spiritual knowledge—the pure gold of the Divine Word—which he afterward discovered in the writings of Mr. Edwards. He hereby acknowledges his great

personal obligations to him. Nor would he presume to come before the public in a volume going over the same ground, in part, as his "History of the Work of Redemption," if he did not fain hope, by a less formal treatise, and one written in a more popular style, perhaps, and brought into intimate relations with some phases of modern thought, to draw the attention of his readers, and more especially the younger part of his brethren in the ministry, and those who are in the process of ministerial training, to this matchless thinker and expounder of the "deep things of God," as treasured up in the revelation he has made to the world.

CHAPTER II.

MATERIALISTIC TENDENCIES AND FORCES.

One of the most marked and well-nigh universal tendencies of the nineteenth century, is in the direction and form of rank Materialism. The natural, the physical, things visible and tangible, are fast coming to dominate the spiritual and the supernatural—things apprehended only by faith—faith in an unseen God, and in the realities of the unseen world, as declared to us by supernatural agents and manifestations. A thousand things, and a thousand active agencies contribute to this result, and help to swell its volume and force. The studies and researches of the scholar, the professor, the scientist and the philosopher, now lie mainly in this direction. The many discoveries which have rewarded effort and diligent application—the multitude of new and wonderful theories which have been advanced in every department of physics, and the high hopes and expectations which are so confidently held out—have stimulated investigation in every unexplored field, and have crowded every path with eager and enthusiastic students.

Astronomy, by the aid of better and more powerful instruments, has opened up new and seemingly boundless fields of discovery, and peopled hitherto unknown solitudes of space with myriads of worlds, and systems of worlds, and gathered data to warrant the belief that *beyond* the utmost line that the eye of man has yet been able to reach, there lie still vaster and more numerous systems of physical being, and, possibly, of animal existence. At the same time the researches and discoveries of modern mind, in this interesting and exhaustless field, have added vast stores to the sum of knowledge—ascertained data—respecting the laws and conditions which govern this material universe.

Geology has, during the last few decades of years, risen

to the dignity of a science, and added the "Testimony of the Rocks," the earth's "Strata," and of "Delta," "Caves" and "Bones of Extinct Animals," to our former limited knowledge and crude ideas, respecting the structure of the earth, the genesis of its creation, and the antiquity and the origin of man. But, unfortunately, this new science has put on lofty airs, and made unwarrantable assumptions; indulged in a tone of assurance, and sweeping conclusion, little becoming in a science born of yesterday, and still in "swaddling clothes." Its startling claims, and oracular judgments, have very naturally and properly brought on a "conflict" between "Science and Religion," which has already waxed hot, and is arraying, in hostile camps, the friends and the enemies of the Christian faith.

Chemistry, likewise, has used the laboratory and the crucible, most diligently and laboriously, and with many curious and highly important results. In a word, scientists, of all stripes and schools, have advanced to the front in the march of progress, and formulated their bold theories, and proclaimed their "wisdom," and asserted their right to be heard, and to have their dogmas accepted as ultimate authority. "Evolution" has been busy in crowding the divine Creator of all things out of his own universe of Matter, and kingdom of Laws, and of Providence; in evolving man himself, "made in the image of God," and exalted in the day of his creation to "dominion" over all creatures on earth—evolving him from the "monkey" of Darwin, or the "horse" of Tyndall; in reducing the sublime and rational doctrine of a Great First Cause to "protoplasm," "fate," "necessity," inexorable and eternal self-existing laws. At the same time the great and manifold "inventions," "appliances" and "improvements," in the physical, mechanical, and social life of the race, and the increased and extraordinary activities business, political, economical, and of every kind—which are seen and felt everywhere, and along every thoroughfare of the world, all tend to attract special attention to, and to invest material things with fresh claims, and give them dominant power over the invisibilities and eternal verities of existence.

Under such a state of things, in such an atmosphere, and encompassed with such forces, is it any marvel, that the doc-

trine of a personal God—of redemption from sin as the first and highest duty, and destiny of man—of a system of spiritual truths, and laws, and worlds of being, infinitely transcending the material, in interest and grandeur—of a Divine Saviour, whose mission to earth, "to seek and to save the lost" sons of God, concerns every man more deeply than all other possible knowledge or attainment—is it any wonder that the fundamental doctrines of our spiritual life and being are fast losing their hold on men's minds, and their power as a guiding and moulding influence on the life of the world? And, if this tendency be not speedily arrested; if there be not sufficient virtue left in the Church of to-day—in her ministry and membership, in her doctrines and ordinances, and instrumentalities—to overcome, or at least essentially correct or modify it—Christianity, although "older than the creation," will become an antiquated religion; and the world, with its teeming millions of immortal existences, will be given over to infidelity and atheism, with all their attending depravities and horrors.*

* The logical outcome of the philosophy of evolution and materialism, is the overthrow of all Divine Worship, as well as the essential principles of ethics—of right thinking, right conduct, and right character.

"If man be nothing but a highly-developed animal, if his conscience be nothing but a satisfaction experienced in the approval of public sentiment, his remorse nothing but a vague uneasiness felt in the lack of such approval; if, in short, his morality be only a sense of expediency gathered from balancing future pleasures and pains against those offered at the present moment—we can see no reason for our recognition of a single law of righteousness that is unselfish, truly noble, eternal, and immutable. The wisest and best thing for a human animal to do—who has thus no God at whose holy bar he must render an account of himself and his deeds—is to enjoy his appetites, or his intellectual inclinations, as the case may be, in any way he can without regard to the sanctions of eternity, or the ever-shifting judgments of what some call conscience. In other words, a man's passions under the regulation of prudential considerations are his only guide, his only sources of learning right and wrong. The clear thinker, we say, saw long ago that this was the real and logical outcome of a bestial philosophy, but was hardly prepared to find one of its most enlightened and devoted disciples distinctly and openly avowing it. But here is a specimen of the latest reasonings of Dr. Van Denslow, the special admirer and apostle of Spencer. He says:

"According to common opinion, it is believed to be moral to tell the

I do not use *extravagant* language in saying this. There is abundant ground to justify it. A single generation—nay, a single decade of years—has wrought a radical, a portentous *change* in the temper and spirit, as well as in the beliefs and practical life of mankind, in reference to these things. And no man of ordinary capacity and intelligence can innocently shut his eyes to the evidences of this alarming fact and quietly dream of a coming "millennium." If necessary, it were not difficult to produce any amount of *proof* to substantiate my statement—sweeping as it may seem—from the published writings of the acknowledged chiefs and leaders in this mod-

truth and immoral to lie. Yet it would be difficult to prove that nature prefers the true to the false, since nature endows every animal with the faculty of deception. Why, then, should not men be endowed with the faculty of lying? It is the strong who require the weak to tell the truth, and always to promote some interest of the strong. Again, 'Thou shalt not steal' is a moral precept invented by the strong, and by them imposed upon the weak. "Thou shalt not steal" is, in a philosophic sense, not a universal but a class law. Again, the laws prohibiting unchastity were framed by those who, in the earlier period of civilization, could afford to own women, against the poor, who could not.'

"Nature then, according to the Evolutionist, teaches and authorizes us to practice lying, stealing, and unbridled lust, and justifies us in so doing whenever we have the inclination, backed by the power. And this is the crowning, the sublime morality of that philosophy whose master, Mr. Spencer, has been ranked by Prof. Youmans as greater even than Sir Isaac Newton, and by Darwin as the 'Prince of Philosophers' If anything in the world could show beyond question the need of a Divine Revelation, which these so-called 'advanced thinkers' reject, it is the avowal of such wild, and vicious, and wicked theories as these. Such theories, carried into conduct, would leave no room on this planet for virtue, for truth, for security of property and life. They would destroy society in its elemental principles, and introduce moral anarchy, while degrading man to a position as much below the brute as he excels the brute in intellectual and reasoning capacities. Well did Carlyle, with a scorn as impatient as it was just, call this whole system of materialistic evolution a 'Philosophy of Dirt!' Happily no parade of learning, nor assumption of speculative superiority can vail its actual and monstrous debasement of man from the detective insight of common sense. COMMON SENSE protests that, while fallen, man has still something in him that lifts him above the brutes, something that allies him with the Deity, in whose image, Revelation adds, he was made."—*Christian at Work.*

In contrast with this creed of the evolutionists I give the opinions of an eminent philosopher, PROF. BEALE, F.R.S., in a recent address

ern movement—Darwin,* Herbert Spencer, Huxley, Tyndall, and our own Youmans, and Fiske, and a host of lesser lights in the firmament of current infidel science. Their numerous works bear the imprimatur of some of our leading publishing houses; while their lighter artillery, more effective in the form and style of popular essay, bristle in the pages of the magazine—the venerable *North American Review*, the *Popular Science Monthly*, and occasionally in the old and once powerful (for *good* only) *Princeton Review*,† in the hands of its ambitious youthful editor; not to name the scores of organs of English and continental scientific thought of the infidel or semi-infidel schools. But formal proof on this point would be superfluous. The fact is patent, and few men of intelligence or scholarship will call it in question.

before the Victoria Philosophical Institute, London. It looks as if a reaction from the horrible creed of these "advanced thinkers," had already set in. What must we think of Mr. Beecher's statement in regard to evolution in the *North American*, in the light of such a statement from so distinguished a scientific quarter! I am indebted to the same source as above for the following:

"The hypothesis of the physical doctrine of life is a sheer fiction, devoid of all reason. No form of the hypothesis which attributes the phenomena of the living to mere matter and its properties, has been, or can be, justified by reason. The materialist c idea of nature, as being a blind, insatiable, irresistible fate, falsely called law, destitute of intelligence and reason, devoid of mercy and justice, is the dullest, narrowest, and the most superficial of all creeds."

*In classing the learned author of the "Origin of Species," and other celebrated works on kindred subjects, with the other names given in the text, I am not indifferent to that which is really good and true in his writings, nor insensible to the eminent services he has rendered in the domain of true science. And yet I am clearly of the opinion that the tendency of his speculations, theories, and productions, as a whole, is towards an infidel, godless system of natural laws and existences. The "Development" theory, as first promulgated by him, and as held and taught by the mass of his disciples since, is anything but Scriptural, or elevating and spiritual in its tendencies.

† Shades of Princeton! Spirits of Miller, and Hodge, and Dod, and Henry, and the Alexanders! "How are the mighty fallen!" The Theology, the Philosophy, the Science, which now, at times, is taught in these once illustrious pages consecrated to "orthodoxy," and the science of revealed and inspired truth, is enough to disturb your peaceful slumbers.

And yet the work of mischief is evidently but just *begun*. The far-reaching tide has but fairly set in towards the shore. The forces which are to wage this most fierce and gigantic war which earth ever witnessed are just disciplining and marshaling for the contest. That tide will *continue* to swell, and broaden, and surge in coming years, until it will sweep, with almost resistless energy—like the floods of the Noachian Deluge—over the whole empire of human thought. Those forces will be augmented day by day; will wax bolder, and more arrogant and determined; and, led on by generals of great ability and skill, many of whom already scout the idea of a God and of immortality, will battle against Christianity, its doctrines, its institutions, its ministry—against all that is supernatural and spiritual in men's beliefs, and lives, and aspirations—until there shall "no place be found for them;" unless He who is in "the midst of the throne" of universal empire shall look down upon this proud and mighty host of impious boasters and blasphemers, as He did upon the host of Pharaoh from the pillar of fire and cloud, and "discomfit them," and rescue his imperiled Church, for which he laid down His life, from overthrow.

The late Prof. Henry B. Smith—than whom a more competent judge never lived—after years of patient investigation of the subject, thus sums up his views, near the close of his life, in concluding a masterly review of the "New Faith of Strauss:"*

"Such, then, according to the New Faith, is wisdom, and here is the place of understanding. The abyss saith, It is in me. It is in that awful depth, in those Blind Forces. And this is the substance of that 'rational' belief, the last and highest product of 'scientific thought,' which is to reform and supersede that effete superstition, called Christianity. An unconscious Universe instead of the Father of all; Fate instead of Providence; a sheer submission to destiny instead of love to a holy and wise and loving God; the laws of nature instead of the law of righteousness; self-reliance instead of pardon and trust; the law of evolution instead of an Incarnate Redeemer; and, in place of immortality, utter oblivion. All religion, all morality, must be refashioned; for all ideas of reason, yea, and reason itself, all ethical precepts, yea, and conscience itself, can have no absolute and permanent worth; since they are

*See Appendix, Section 1.

but evanescent and necessary products of that o'ermastering Force, which is above all, and through all, and in all. And as no man can grasp its nature, so no man can foresee what may or may not be yet evolved out of the recesses of its unfathomable, unconscious, and irrational being.

"A generation drugged with such a fell delusion will change the face of the earth. Especially in our own country, where material prosperity is so rife and seductive, and material necessities are so urgent and constant—if to these be added the concentration and impetus of a scientific and aggressive materialism, and our whole theory of life be transmuted by its incantations—no imagination can forecast its perils, and no wisdom curb its riotous excesses. For nothing will be sacred to it; there is no hallowed word it will not scoffingly transform; there is no institution of Church or State it will not destroy and reshape; the only law it knows is the tyrant's maxim, that might makes right. Neither strength nor beauty can be in its sanctuary. Let the race be thoroughly taught in this new creed, blinded to the supreme light of reason and the imperative obligations of conscience, indifferent to God and to eternal life, and it will be ready to perish. To the most cultured, life will be only a narrow realism; for the mass of mankind there is left chiefly a fierce struggle for wealth and power and pleasure, with the survival of the strongest. And this New Faith is, after all, but a revival of the oldest form of the most degrading unbelief; it cuts off the wings of the soul, drags it down to earth, and extorts from it the reluctant and despairing confession, that all that is left it is a dogged purpose to submit to annihilation, as do the beasts that perish. If a brute could become conscious, it could not have any less religion."*

This powerful tendency towards a dominant Materialism is not confined to the *scientific* world. It is at work everywhere, along every line of thought, and activity, in every sphere of life, in every form of development. The literature of the age is saturated with it. The preaching we hear, to a large extent, is a gospel of mere naturalism, a gospel stripped of its supernatural character, a gospel which is no longer "the wisdom of God and the power of God unto salvation," but the wisdom and glory of nature, in its newly-discovered phases and forces, preached as a means of "culture," or "entertainment." The arguments and appeals of religion are fast losing

* *Presbyterian Quarterly and Princeton Review*, April, 1874; pp. 279, 280.

their power over the public mind, and conscience, especially the young, under the influence of a subtle, disguised infidelity—for whatever denies the supernatural in religion, and subordinates it to nature, is essentially infidel, no matter what form it takes on, or by what name it is known.

The question is often asked, Whence the remarkable impotence of preaching in our day? And the true answer to the question is given by the late Dr. Bushnell:

"It is because we concoct our gospels too much in the laboratories of our understanding; because we preach too many disquisitions, and look for effects correspondent only with the natural forces exerted. True preaching is a testimony, a testimony direct from God to man's religious nature, which, once awakened, cleaves to Christ and his salvation, by an almost irresistible affinity. . . No man is a preacher because he has something like or about a gospel in his head. He really preaches only when his person is the living embodiment, the inspired organ of the gospel; in that manner no mere human power, but the demonstration of a Christly and divine power. It is in this manner that preaching has had, in former times, effects so remarkable. At present, we are almost all under the power, more or less, of the age in which we live. Infected with naturalism ourselves, and having hearers that are so, we can hardly find what account to make of our barrenness."*

We trace the same tendency in the productions of *Art*. It is the school of the sensuous and not the *spirituelle* which now dominates. We look in vain for the divine conceptions, the lofty ideals, and the amazingly delicate touches of color, and shading, and expression, which characterized the old masters—Michael Angelo, Raphael, Rembrandt, and the earlier paintings of Rubens—in any of the productions of modern art. And the "subjects" chosen, are no longer "cherubs," "angels," "The Infant Jesus," "The Madonna," "The Head of Christ," "The Night of the Crucifixion," "The Descent from the Cross," "The Last Supper," or "The Last Judgment." For the most part they are material, sensuous subjects—often

* Nature and the Supernatural; pp. 515, 516.

nude figures of a gross, sensual type—anything but divine or angelic in conception, in expression, in spirit or coloring—simply of "the earth earthy." A visit to a gallery of modern paintings will not give one a very high opinion of the "divine art."—The *Drama* is no exception. The decline of the stage is a marked and sad feature of the times. The fact is admitted and deplored by its warmest friends and admirers. No theatre, in these days, can prosper on the classic plays of Shakespeare, Corneille, and other authors who once dignified the stage and made it a means of mental and social culture, as well as recreation and pleasure.

To what depths of mental inanity and sensuous depravity has the modern drama descended! The "popular" plays of the day reek with the filth of the French capital in its extreme degeneracy. They have not one redeeming feature: they are gross, "sensual, devilish." And yet how this vile, obscene, sensuous style of drama falls in with the popular tastes, and "draws" full houses! Crowds of men, and women, and boys, throng our numerous theatres, night after night, during all the "season;" only to be steeped in moral corruption; only to see vice gilded, and virtue scouted, and indecency applauded, and the grossest forms of materialistic life set forth in a blaze of glory, and made as attractive as scenic effect and popular acting can render them.

Notwithstanding increased attention has been given of late to the cultivation of *Music*, few will claim that the "popular" taste for it has been chastened and elevated proportionately. The old masters—Mozart, Beethoven, Handel, Haydn, and Mendelssohn—have lost their supremacy, at least with the masses. Their music is of too high an order, too classical, to be appreciated, except by a true cultivated taste, which is wanting in the multitude of concert and opera goers. The sublime oratorios of "David," "The Messiah," "Saul," "Israel in Egypt," "Samson," "Jephthah's Daughter," Mozart's "Requiem," and others equally grand, are now seldom heard at the opera, or at musical entertainments. Music of a light, trifling, sensuous character, is the most popular. The evidence of this is seen in the fact, that the "prima donnas" of the opera and the stage, who meet this popular demand, get fabulous pay, and reap princely fortunes in

a few years. I would not imply that there is no genuine music in these days, and none to appreciate it. My criticism is meant to apply to the mass of society, and the mass of the flashy music now so popular.

Poetry is no exception. Swinburne, Walt Whitman, and Bret Harte, are fair representatives of a large and growing school of popular poetry. Who are to fill the places of our own Bryant, Longfellow, and Whittier? Can the reader name a single poet among all our scribblers on whom their mantle is likely to fall?

Is not the fact as patent as it is lamentable, that the spirit of the age is developed mainly, not in the direction of the lofty ideal, but the groveling utilitarian? That its tastes, demands, and tendencies, are towards lower, and grosser or more sensuous standards? This is true not only in matters of religion, and morals, but in everything that relates to the realm of the beautiful and the spiritual, demoralizing our very conceptions of truth and being.

The divine spirit of *Poesy*, incarnated in large portions of the Old Testament Scriptures, and in the genius of such men as Milton, Dante and Shakespeare, Watts, Cowper and Toplady, and the Wesleys, and which has found expression in many of the grand old Hymns of the Christian Church—where is it articulated in our *modern* literature? Not even the *Hymnology*, which the "ages" have slowly accumulated, as a priceless inheritance, has escaped that pernicious influence which has written "Ichabod" on so many things that were once "lovely and of good report," as must be apparent to every one critically familiar with the subject. Conceive, if you can, of such a wonderful Hymn as *Dies Iræ*,* in cast, and spirit, and

* "Day of wrath, that day of burning,
All shall melt, to ashes turning,
As foretold by seers discerning."

The above is the first verse of the translation made by the late Abraham Cole, M.D., of Newark, N. J. He made no less than thirteen distinct versions of the hymn; and so high an authority as Dr. Philip Schaff, awards the palm, among English translators, to this American physician. The *translations* alone of this poem will fill a volume, and the literature of the translators and critics several more. See *Hours at Home*, Vol. VII., pp. 239-248, and 261-268, for two exceedingly interest-

sentiment, begotten of the *spirit of the nineteenth century!* Conceive of scores of the most eminent scholars, and divines, and literary men of our time, devoting much study and labor upon it, in order to give a true and spirited rendering of the Latin text into English, and other living languages! Conceive of the interest felt in it, and the work expended upon it, to be so great that the literature of this poem of fifty-four lines would fill several volumes! And the same is true of some of Shakespeare's plays, and Dante's. What a *change* has come over the spirit of the world!

Whatever may be said in praise of the series of popular sacred songs known as "Gospel Hymns," it must be admitted that the standard of poetry in them is anything but exalted. They are, for the most part, lacking in every element and expression of true lyrical sentiment adapted to the devotions of the sanctuary. There are not more than a score of *new* hymns in the four books, that have in them the breath of immortality. And is it any wonder, when we study the *history* of them? *Good* hymns, hymns and music *worthy* of a permanent place in God's sanctuary, are not made in a day—run through a machine: they are the slow growth of ages: the precious fruit of inspired hours, which are like "angel visits" to a few gifted souls. And *these* hymns could never, *on their merits*, have come into such extensive use.

The *name* too is invidious and challenges criticism. "*Gos-*

ing papers on this subject, from the competent and accomplished pen of Dr. Schaff. I must find space for a word from his pen, descriptive of the poem:

"The secret of its beauty and power lies first in the intensity of Christian feeling with which its great theme is handled. The poet realizes the impending judgment of the world as an awful and overpowering fact that is as certain as the approach of night. He hears the trumpet of the archangel sounding through the open sepulchres. He sees the dead rising from the dust of ages, and stands aghast before the final conflagration and collapse of the universe. He sees the Son of Man seated in terrific majesty on the judgment throne, with the open book of the dead of ages, dividing the good from the bad, and pronouncing the irrevocable sentence of everlasting weal and everlasting woe. And with the spirit of an humble penitent he pleads for mercy, mercy at the hands of Him who left his throne of glory and died on the cross for the salvation of sinners. The poem is in the highest degree pathetic—a cry from the depth of personal experience, and irresistibly draws every reader into sympathetic excitement. That man is indeed to be pitied who can read it without shaking and quivering with emotion."

pel Hymns!" Are they such *par excellence?* Far from it. In this respect they fall immeasurably below our standard collections. There is quite too much "gush," "sentiment," human passion and machinery. There is less Christian doctrine, or serious pious thought in them, less of the divine flavor, and richness, and depth, and varied experience, of Watts, and Cowper, and Toplady, and the Wesleys, and Steele, and Kerr, and Palmer, and other writers, whose rare and inspired lyrics are found in all our best "collections," and which have contributed so largely to the edification and spirituality of God's people in ages past.

What will be the influence of such sacred songs on the tastes, the devotions, the religious sentiments, and the spiritual development of the church of the Future? The question is pertinent: it is momentous: it is one which greatly concerns us all, and especially the rising generation, and the entire church of Christ. There are two facts on this point which the church ought to take into view in considering this question, viz., the enormous, unprecedented sale of these hymns,* and the extraordinary use made of them. Not only are they more widely circulated than any other—than all others probably combined—but the use of them forms one of the chief features of the "Gospel Service," so prominent in the "evangelistic" work of the day. Hence their influence, whatever it be, is simply *prodigious.* If it is entirely of the *right* kind, we ought to rejoice and thank God. If not, the friends of a high order of Christian Psalmody, and of a serious, rational, intelligent, doctrinal and spiritual religion cannot bestir themselves too soon to remedy the evil.

A thoroughly competent critic has well said: "We let a new hymn into our books a great deal too readily. We ought to stop it, and challenge it, and try it with varying tests before we give it entrance. Especially we ought to frown indignantly upon that popular heresy which estimates the value of a hymn or tune just in proportion to its novelty." † But here is not

* Nearly *eleven millions* of copies of them have been sold in this country in seven years, and about *twenty-two* millions of them abroad! I give the figures from good authority.

† Rev. George W. Bacon, in *Hours at Home,* Vol. VI., p. 386.

only a "new hymn" let into our books, for sanctuary use, but scores of them, "four books" in the short space of seven years!—and all of them on a par, all unchallenged, and under circumstances which have secured for them favor altogether beyond what their merits justify.

It surely is not difficult to see "what grave peril is upon us," when we admit book after book, "unchallenged and unscrutinized," to be sung not only in all our social meetings during the week, but to displace on the Sabbath the accredited "Hymns of the Ages," around which cluster so many sacred memories and associations. It is not a pleasant task to *criticise* hymns gotten up for a sacred purpose, and already adopted extensively by the friends of religion and used exclusively by Mr. Moody and other accredited evangelists. But popularity is not evidence of real merit; but it should lead us to scan with special jealousy and strictness. The end does not sanctify the means. Religion does not sanction cant, or twaddle, or shallow sentiment, or conceit. If God required *perfection* in the offerings of the temple service, "a lamb without spot or blemish," He will not be pleased with that which is imperfect and inferior in the praise of the Christian sanctuary.

One thing will be admitted by the thoughtful reader: we cannot afford to give up the grand old hymns of Christian literature, which are precious in memory, and instinct with biblical doctrine, and life, and imagery, and the ripest forms of religious experience, from David down through the ages. We cannot afford to try any doubtful *experiment* in this line; and we ought not to be silent, and let this flood-tide sweep away the sacred lyrics of the church and vitiate the public taste in reference to this all-important part of Divine worship.

The tendency of not a few of these hymns—and this is one of our strongest objections to them—is to *materialize* religion in the popular conception; to strip it of its divine ideality, and simplicity, and spirituality, and give it a sensuous form, and a human expression. The effect produced by them on a popular audience, especially the solos, is essentially operatic, particularly when rendered by a professional singer from the opera, as was done at the "Gospel Services" conducted by Rev.

George F. Pentecost in the Brooklyn Academy of Music, last winter, in the presence of thousands. It only needed the accessories of the "opera" to make the illusion complete.*

Even stronger objections still may justly be made to the numerous collections of hymns designed for use in our *Sunday-schools*. Their number is "legion." Rival publishers

*I write both from observation and experience. I worship at present with the church ministered to by the able and laborious evangelist named above. Not only is No. 4 of the series of "Gospel Hymns" used by him exclusively in the evening service, but the first half hour of the service is devoted to singing them by the congregation, under the leadership of Mr. G. C. Stebbins, who, with Mrs. Stebbins, often sing in duets. This same book is used exclusively in the Academy service conducted by the same persons. I have therefore a good opportunity to judge of the character of these hymns, and that under the most *favorable* circumstances. The fault may be my own, but I confess that I fail to appreciate them, or to get that spiritu l good from them which I never fail to get from the old familiar hymns and tunes which sanctified genius has consecrated, and memory and association hallow in my thoughts. I have heard these favorite singers render, repeatedly, the hymn, "On the River Gliding"—thought to be among the best in the collection—yet, to my mind, there is no more "gospel" in it, and no more spiritual feeling inspired by it, than to read of or witness the antics of a man in a-swimming. The fault is not in the singers, but in the cast and sentiment of the hymn—

"Floating—floating—floating."

Conceive of such a class of hymns being sung in heaven! Yet many of the majestic hymns of the church would not be out of place even there. Familiar to the saints on earth for centuries, and associated with their holiest and profoundest experiences during their pilgrimage here, they will be welcome to them there, and be sung with a spirit and rapture new and inspiring. Such immortal songs for instance as Duncan's

"All hail the power of Jesus' name!"

or Medley's

"Oh could I speak the matchless worth."

or Watts'

"Raise your triumphant songs."

or Ray Palmer's

"My faith looks up to thee."

or Grant's

"Jesus, I my cross have taken."

or Adams'

"Nearer, my God, to thee."

or Toplady's

"Rock of ages, cleft for me."

evince great shrewdness and enterprise in "getting them up," and getting them into circulation. They are mostly "made to order," and made with chief reference to gain. The character of the books: the kind of influence they will exert on the numberless children and youth training in our Sunday-schools—are subordinate questions. The paramount consideration is *popularity*, with a view to the largest possible sale.

Now any person competent to form a judgment, who will be at the pains to examine this crude, immense mass of hymnology, cannot fail to come to the conclusion that the most of it is totally unfit, both on literary and religious grounds, for so important and sacred a mission. A large number of the hymns are simply atrocious – beneath criticism—false in sentiment, "without rhythm or reason, and the music without melody." The spirit fostered by this wretched literature in the minds of so vast a multitude, and the moral and religious training which it is helping to impart to those who are soon to bear rule in the church and in the state, are anything but hopeful. And yet scarcely a voice is raised against the evil, when there should be a loud and indignant protest heard from one end of the land to the other. I have not space here to go into this matter; only to state the evil, which I believe to be a very serious one, both in character and magnitude. My attention has been editorially given to this subject for many years, and I have often before given expression to my views through various channels. But by far the fullest and ablest criticism of our "Sunday-school Muse" which I have ever seen in print, was written, at my instance, by the late Rev. George W. Bacon, of Orange, N. J., a highly gifted son of Dr. Leonard Bacon, and published some years since in *Hours at Home*.* I

*Vol. VI. pp. 385–397. It is fourteen years since these caustic yet friendly criticisms were penned, and several years since the highly esteemed author was cut off in the midst of a career of rare promise. But they are as just to-day, and have as wide an application as when his sterling sense, and wit, and genius, gave them form. Some *improvement* there has been since then, especially in the hymns prepared and published by the Sunday-school Union. I take great pleasure also in naming *Spiritual Songs for the Sunday-school*, selected and arranged by Rev. Charles S. Robinson, D.D., and published by the Century Co., New York. It is far superior as a collection, in every respect, to anything I have

would most urgently commend this paper to the reader's notice. As a *critique* on this subject it has never been equaled.

The modern *conception of Heaven* extensively prevalent, also indicates the extent to which materialistic views are current even in Christian circles. The reader probably has not forgotten the sensation produced a few years since by the publication of a book entitled "Gates Ajar," by ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS. Its literary merits were not of a very high order; not equal to other works by the same author, already before the public; not superior to the average works of fiction which are yearly produced by the score; and yet that little book made the young author famous, and had a very extensive sale. And what was the secret? Simply because, in the

seen, and its general introduction would work a highly favorable change in our Sunday-school literature.

The good effect of Mr. Bacon's effort to reform this class of hymns was apparent for a while, and had he lived to maintain the fight, he would have won the battle. But the good impression was effaced in the rush of years; and the greed of publishers has continued to cater to a vitiated popular taste which they have been mainly instrumental in creating. Instead of "gagging the Sunday-school muse," and "laughing away" her "follies," "inanities," and "mischievous twaddle," as Mr. Bacon suggested, by way of "remedy," the past few years have been more prolific than ever before in Sunday-school song; and publishers are rushing one collection after another upon the public, and crowding the advertising columns of our religious papers with flaming advertisements setting forth the superior merits of the very "latest." A single extract from Mr. Bacon as showing the spirit and vigor with which he wrote:

"But in all soberness we are bound to acknowledge the tremendous power of the Sunday-school system, of Sunday-school literature, of Sunday-school song; and we ought not to be content until that power is wielded wisely, devoutly, and efficiently for good. Under any circumstances the influence of song is something hard to measure. When it is employed among susceptible children, and put upon their lips, and rung into their ears, it becomes greater than ever; but when, in addition to this, it is fraught with religious associations, or with irreligious, it becomes well nigh infinite in its results. More than once, in the history of the church, heresy has been most efficiently promoted, error most insidiously propagated, by means of song. And every one knows how readily music lends itself to the abuses of immorality and vice. It surely is not difficult to see what grave peril is upon us when we admit, unchallenged and unscrutinized, to be sung by children in religious places, songs which ignorant and mercenary writers have thrust upon us. . . What the Sunday-school muse most needs is to be no longer a fool, nor an errorist, nor a rowdy, but to be converted and become like the little children for whom she undertakes to act"—pp. 396-397.

latter part of the book the fair author's theory of the future life—her ideas of the society, the enjoyments, the amusements, and the employments of Heaven—were graphically set forth. And they were of such a character as to fall in exactly with the tastes and desires of the denizens of earth. Heaven, as thus described, was a charming place even to the "carnal" mind. No one needs to become a Christian to feel quite at home there. It is simply transplanting this earthly life, its loves, pastimes, and enjoyments to a higher sphere, and giving them a larger field and an intenser life. In a word, it was the vivid painting of an intensely excited imagination, under the pressure of a great personal sorrow, which had robbed *this* life of all sunshine in snatching "Roy" from her; and made the fruition of all hope in the *next* to consist in restoring sundered hearts: the very "beatitudes" of heaven to be nothing holier or more spiritual than the reunion and enjoyment of lovers! Certainly the heaven of Miss Phelps, and the heaven of the Scriptures, have scarcely a feature in common. The one is a *material* heaven, and not of a very high cast—little better than a Mohammedan paradise—very much like to the present world, only perhaps a little surer, and intenser, in its loves and pleasures; while the heaven of the Scriptures—the heaven which Christ has gone to prepare for them that love Him, and in which He is to dwell with them forever—is a state of the highest *spiritual* existence, activity, and blessedness—a world so pure, so exalted, so glorious, so above our present capacity to understand it, that Paul, caught up in the spirit to behold it, was not permitted to reveal the wondrous vision.*

* Although "Gates Ajar" was written under the shadow of Andover, by the daughter of Prof. Austin Phelps, and granddaughter of the late Prof. Moses Stuart, both of whom were long and honorably connected with that celebrated school of the prophets, yet it cannot be supposed to be the outcome of any beliefs or tendencies fostered there. It was simply a human *conceit*, worked up with dramatic effect, under the sway of a morbid imagination, and the intensest of human passions. But it fell in with the popular current of ideas, concerning what Dr. Dick calls "The Philosophy of a Future State." The sentiments expressed in many of the songs of the sanctuary, especially in Sunday-school hymns and literature, are of the same cast, and give to heaven the aspects and attractions of a well-appointed pleasure-house.

Dr. Thomas Dick's "Philosophy of a Future State," as well as Isaac Taylor's "Theory of Another Life," are well worth reading. They are scarcely to be named in connection with "Gates Ajar:" they are so superior in purpose, in character, in intellectual and moral effect. And yet, with very much that is true, and ennobling, and even grand in the work of the former, the author takes a view of heaven, particularly of its life in reference to Christ's Redeeming work, so at variance with the tone, and representations of the Scriptures—with the design, the scope, the extent, the infinite grandeur and the everlasting duration of "the Kingdom of Righteousness," that I cannot refrain from entering my total dissent, and at the same time to express my surprise that so able and intelligent a Christian writer and philosopher, should teach such low and unworthy views of the chief of all God's works and wonders. In Chapter XI., entitled "God's Favorite Work Disparaged," I have made an extract from this work, and endeavored to show that the author's views of the heavenly state are contrary both to Scripture and to reason.

It does not follow from what I have written, that the world has made, and is making, no *progress*. There *has* been marvelous growth and expansion during the last few decades of years; but chiefly in one direction, chiefly in one domain of life, the domain of the physical. If asked for the *evidences* of this progress, we should not point to an elevated and purified humanity, to a nobler and more expansive Christian faith, to the Church of Christ freed from bondage to error and sin, and rejoicing in a greater liberty, and more thoroughly trained and equipped for her great mission of love and regeneration. No: there has been but little, if any, advancement in any of these respects. Such ideas, such principles, such results, do not represent the dominant spirit of the age. Progress has made to itself other channels. The progressive spirit of the race is truly and fittingly represented in mammoth "exchanges," thronged with excited "money changers;" in "palatial" stores and dwellings, the business and domestic homes of "princely merchants;" fleets of merchantmen whitening every sea; locomotives dashing along iron pathways with almost lightning

speed; telegraphy annihilating space and bringing the ends of the earth together; private fortunes estimated at scores and even hundreds of millions; and every possible appliance for man's material comfort and gratification. *These* are the gigantic forces in human society, against which the Church of to-day is called to contend, and the absorbing and seductive influence of which no power short of Omnipotence can overcome and bring into subjection to Jesus Christ.

But there has been in the meantime, no actual *growth of the human intellect.* These immense activities, in the realm of physics, do not evince increased mental depth, or breadth, or higher conceptions or purposes. Instead of elevating man in the scale of moral and intellectual being; instead of producing a civilization based on Christian principles, and the higher life, as the leading facts in human history—these material forces of progress have simply spread themselves out over new and vaster fields, and flooded the earth with the glory of an enlarged physical dispensation. Under all this display and activity, has the *mind* of man attained to a higher plane? Has it taken on a severer discipline, or reached forth to grander heights, or achieved superior and worthier results? Have the great problems of being and destiny been pushed any nearer to a true and satisfying solution? Progress there has been, undoubtedly, in some departments of mental training and acquisition. It is so beyond a doubt in the science of mind. We have an improved class of text-books. The labors of Sir William Hamilton and J. Stuart Mill abroad, and of our own Presidents Hopkins, McCosh, and Porter, will readily occur to the reader's mind. And to these may be added the work of Prof. Hamilton, now in the press of the Messrs. Carter, of this city—a work that will give the esteemed author high rank among those who have made the science of mind their study. And it is particularly true in the province of Biblical Exegesis, Biblical Antiquities, Sacred Geography, Egyptology, and other kindred subjects. But important and valuable as these are, they all pertain to the "letter," rather than the "spirit" of the Word. They are "means," "helps," rather than accomplished intellectual, moral or spiritual results. What grand fruitage have they borne? Have these improved helps

lifted the student, or the preacher of the day, into a better discernment and a higher appreciation of the one DIVINE BOOK of the ages? Have they served to make the preaching of it more assured, more intelligent, more earnest, more powerful to convince and convert dying sinners?

The world will scarcely contain all the books which have been written and published during the last half century. But which of them all are characterized by great depth of research, by superior breadth of view, by original, profound, masterly thinking, or even by a vigorous and improved style of expression? How few of them all will survive the generation which gave them birth? Is there a score of them that will live to influence the thought and life of the coming ages of man, as many of the writings of the old masters live in the present, and are live factors in the world's onward movements? Nay, has the spirit of this boasting age produced even *one* immortal work, in the higher range of thought, or philosophy, or literature? Name the poem, the work in art, in painting, or sculpture, the oratorio in music, the play in drama, the master-treatise in theology, or in mental or moral science—the work of any kind in the realm of pure reason, intellect, spirit, ideal conception—that indicates real *progress*, and at the same time measures the extent of it, compared with the past. Any such immortal works as the *Novum Organum*, Celestial Mechanics, the *Divine Commedia*, Paradise Lost, Macbeth, Butler's Analogy, or Paley's Theology? And why? Has mankind already reached "the golden age" of intellectual development? Is there nothing *above and beyond present* attainment, to aspire to, and strive for? Or, is not the solution of the singular problem rather to be found in the fact that the physical has come to dominate the intellectual and the spiritual? That the activities and forces of modern times are turned chiefly in the direction of *materialistic* development and progress, at the expense of that which is higher and better? Standing as we do in the midst of this rushing and overflowing tide of materialistic life and grandeur, is there not pertinency, and startling emphasis in the words inspired of God: "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole *world* and lose his own *soul?* or what shall a man give in *exchange* for his *soul?*"

But I must not dwell longer on this preliminary matter. While I have taken but a hasty and, confessedly, superficial survey of the wide field, I have expressed, or suggested, it may be, sufficient to lay a foundation for what is to follow. If I have carried my reader with me at all, I have impressed his mind with the conviction that we are confronted with a peril that is real, and imminent: not a peril growing out of effete systems of religious beliefs, or philosophies, or political and social institutions, or of the civilizations of the Past—but with a peril infinitely more vital, and radical—a peril begotten by the living all-powerful civilization of the nineteenth century, led on, and energized, and made all-potent by the new and mighty forces which it has called into active being and bound to its chariot-wheels, and subsidized to its purposes and mission. And looking at this modern Force in the light of Revealed truth, in the light of Christian Faith—we read on its banners the ominous, sententious, and startling inscription: "No God! no devil! no heaven! no hell! no soul! no immortality! death an eternal sleep! Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." And this Creed is not only flaunted in the face of the Christian Church, on a thousand banners, and at a time when she verily looked for a predicted Millennium; but it is also boldly proclaimed from the press, the platform, and the professor's chair—in lectures, conventions, and associations of scientists in essays, popular and learned, in scientific journals, and reviews, and stately volumes—in art, in painting, in the drama, in poetry, and in song.

The question, therefore, is pertinent, and it is a weighty one: What power can check or turn back this strong incoming tide of a godless Materialism? What arm, what weapons, can successfully cope with this formidable array of learning, talent, genius, popular address, arrogant claims, and materialistic forces? Is the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ impotent? Is the power of the Christian Church gone from her—the power that abolished the old Mosaic dispensation and established the new; the power that overthrew idolatry, and humbled philosophy, and subjugated imperial Rome, and went on "from conquering to conquer;" until the face of the earth was changed? Is this power—once so potent in the hands of apostles, and the little church gathered by them at

Jerusalem, and in a few of the cities of Asia, is it among the "lost arts?" The teachers of religion—a religion as true, as grand, as inspired, as closely and vitally related in spirit and purpose to Christ's Person and Kingdom, *to-day* as when Peter preached it on the day of Pentecost to the murderers of Jesus, and Paul discoursed it to the assembled philosophers of Athens, and Luther thundered it forth over all Germany and waked a dead Church, and a slumbering world, to life. There is *one* Power, and only one, that is equal to the task, the emergency: it is "the Lamb in the midst of the Throne." And the ministers of that invincible, once slain but now exalted and reigning Christ, have but to do their complete duty as the ambassadors of this Power; to fill their hearts, and baptize their ministry, with His love and spirit; to grasp the stupendous theme of the Cross in their conceptions, and unfold, and emphasize, and apply the "truth as it is in Jesus" —the truth as it is revealed to faith in "the lively oracles of God"—to give themselves, heart and soul, gifts and learning, prayer and labor unceasing—to the highest of all callings, in order to exalt religion to its own high place in men's esteem, and make Christianity the dominant influence in the thought and progressive life of even the closing period of the nineteenth century.

In the earnest hope that this volume, however humble its source, or deficient in skill and power, may contribute in some slight degree to so important an end, I venture to send it forth on its mission. If I have been too free and severe or sweeping in my criticism, it has not arisen from a censorious spirit, but rather from the intensity of my convictions. I am so painfully impressed with what I believe to be the extreme peril of the hour to the Church of the Redeemer, and the one Hope of the world; and, at the same time, so thoroughly convinced that God's own chosen means to thwart the Devil's purposes and "give the kingdom to the people of the saints of the Most High," if they can once be fully aroused to press the battle of the ages to a result, seeking help from Him through the eternal Word and Spirit, is fully adequate to achieve a decisive and overwhelming victory. Thus believing, thus impressed, I should be recreant to my strongest and maturest convictions, if I did not use plain and strong words.

CHAPTER III.

THE LOW TYPE OF THEOLOGY AS EXPRESSED IN THE MODERN PULPIT AND LITERATURE.

SECTION I.

THE PULPIT AND THEOLOGY OF THE DAY.

It will not be disputed by an intelligent man, that the Theology which finds expression in the popular preaching, and literature of our time, is not characterized by great breadth of view, or vigor of statement; by a high-toned evangelicalism, or by a commendable fidelity to the historical standards of doctrinal belief. On the contrary, there is, on every hand, a lowering of the standard of accepted "orthodoxy." There is a decided broadening of the views of the evangelical ministry. There is a marked liberalizing of the spirit of the Christian Brotherhood, both as to inter-communion of denominations, and in its attitude towards those without the pale of the visible Church. There is far less stress laid on doctrinal preaching, on catechetical instruction, and on subscription to definite formularies of faith. Other tests are now applied, in a measure at least, to determine a candidate's qualifications to preach the gospel, or a man's privilege to commune with the Church of God. So apparent is this change that no formal proof of my statement is necessary.

A great number of causes and influences have doubtless contributed to produce this result. It is not my purpose to go into this branch of the subject, however, to any extent. The *fact* is the main thing with which I am at present concerned.

Doubtless the *spirit of the age*, as we term it, has had a powerful influence in moulding the preaching and literature of the times. It could not well be otherwise. To a certain ex-

tent this was inevitable, and also desirable. The Pulpit must be abreast of the times; it must study and understand them, and adapt its methods to them, or be cast aside, or left quite behind. While the Gospel is eternal and unchangeable in all its principles and teachings, yet it is universal in its adaptability and application—equally so as to individual characters, and to every age of the world, and every condition of society. The ministry may be true to Christ, true to the fundamental doctrines of revealed religion, and may preach and exemplify a vigorous and scriptural theology, and a high-toned evangelical spirit and life, and yet meet every demand of the age, and the society in which God has cast its lot. But while this is *possible*, and manifestly the *duty* of all; yet experience and observation plainly teach us that this is not commonly the case. All history declares that the Pulpit, as a rule, sympathizes with the age; takes its character, its impress from it. It ought *not* so to be; but so it is. "Like people like priest." An age of intense worldliness, or infidelity, or stagnation of mind, or declension of godliness, is sure to find expression in the preaching, the theology, and the literature of the period. While the ministers of the sanctuary are ordained of God, yet are they men of "like passions with others;" and the great body of them will not rise much above the common level of the Christian Brotherhood, in spirituality, in doctrinal soundness, or in consecration to the high ends of the gospel. A dead, worldly, indifferent, Christless church, will soon break its minister's heart, or drag him down to their own level, generally the latter.

To one who understands and appreciates the spirit and character of the *present* age, in its moral and religious aspects, it cannot appear surprising that the preaching and theology of the day should show a sad decline from the high scripture standard, and from the spirit and temper and power which have characterized other and more favorable periods. The change is just what we might expect. Great and lamentable as it is, it is not more so than one might suppose, in view of the existing condition of the mind and life of the world in general. For the piety of the Church is at a very low ebb. The spirit of intense worldliness prevails everywhere. Men are

absorbed, probably as never before, in the pursuit and enjoyment of earthly things. Religion, God, salvation, death, judgment, and eternity, seem to have little weight with, or give little concern to, the multitude of mankind. Everybody is "in haste to be rich," not towards God, but towards "the mammon of unrighteousness." And in addition to all this, the spirit of "unbelief" has run riot. An age of ungodliness is sure to be an age of abounding infidelity. An age of free-thinking, a revolt from traditional beliefs, is always an age of licentiousness in doctrine. The decay of piety in the heart of the church, means a decay of doctrinal soundness in the head.

Probably a thoroughly *scriptural and apostolic* ministry never had a harder time of it than now. Probably more numerous, and potent, and subtle forces are arrayed against the simple, and exclusive, and faithful preaching of "Christ and him crucified," than were ever before experienced. It is not so much open opposition, or persecution, or denunciation, that the ministry has to dread. It can face, and thrive and grow strong and independent on such treatment. It is the subtle and insidious influence of indifferentism, worldliness, formalism, irreligion, wealth, and fashion, and outward prosperity. These act as a deadly "malaria," to relax and weaken every sinew, every element of power, and to poison the very life of the ministry. I do not write this in the way of an *apology*. The Master will accept no such apology. But the responsibility, the sin involved in the matter, is shared in by the church at large. The ministry would be more than human to rise above all their surroundings, rise superior to all these enervating, depressing, and poisoning influences and forces, which literally environ them, and maintain, not only their personal and ministerial integrity, but pure doctrine, and a high degree of spirituality, and unflinching firmness, and Pauline fidelity to the cross.

2. Another cause of the existing low type of theology, as expressed in the pulpit, and literature of the day, as well as in the life of the church, relates to the *Word of God*. It does not hold the place in the modern pulpit to which it is unquestionably entitled—the place it has held in the purer periods of the church's history. Nominally of course it is recognized as

supreme in authority, and the only, and an all-sufficient guide in spiritual things. But really, as a matter of common experience and observation, there is not that reverence felt for it, that childlike trust in its teachings, that homage to its divine authority, that devout and earnest study of it, that familiarity with it, and use of it in the preaching and religious literature of the day, which has marked other periods. It is not too much to affirm, that there has been a very great and general *decline* in this particular. Exceptions there are, and they are the more noted and observed because of their extreme rarity. Whoever will take the trouble to compare the printed sermons of the modern pulpit with those of former generations, will be impressed with the contrast in respect to the *biblical* element, not only with reference to the language, but the thought, and spirit. And another feature of the contrast is no less marked. Not only is the biblical element singularly lacking; but the tone, the high standard, the divine authority, the holy boldness, which should ever and always characterize the ambassador of Christ, and which Paul, and Peter, and a host of preachers since their day, exemplified in their preaching, are far less conspicuous. Our popular theology is sadly diluted. It is, to a great extent, a halting, a weak-kneed, a qualified theology. It is not positive, assured, dogmatic in the true sense. Our popular preaching is not of that sturdy, vigorous, unreserved, uncompromising character, which becomes Christianity, and which was never more imperatively demanded by the condition of the church and the world than now. In this day of the multiplicity of books, on all subjects, and in every department of thought and life, and when the press is flooding every avenue with the ubiquitous newspaper, and the magazine, and the tract; and when literary ambition is excited to the highest pitch, and is fed by nutriment temptingly offered from a thousand sources, it is no small or easy thing for the One Book of Divine wisdom and life to retain its ascendency in the world, even in the minds, and studies, and preaching of the men who are its divinely constituted conservators and expounders.

That there is wanting, in the mass of ministers of the day, a thorough critical, systematic, and experimental knowl-

edge, and appreciation of the WORD, admits not of a doubt. Not a few of them, nothing is hazarded in saying, are more proficient and better furnished, in matters purely literary, scientific, or secular, than in the doctrines, principles, laws, and literature of the Word of salvation. Not a few of them do not so much as aspire to a knowledge of "the deep things of God;" to be able to bring forth things "new" as well as "old," from the great treasury of divine knowledge; to furnish "the strong meat" for the mature Christian, as well as "the sincere milk of the word," for "babes." They are content with a limited insight into the profound "mystery" of godliness, and with a superficial acquaintance with the contents of the inspired records. They do not apply their minds, resolutely, persistently, and systematically, to *master* the Divine science, as men do in other departments of knowledge. They do not carry into their studies of the Word, and their researches into its hidden depths of wisdom, power and grace, the enthusiasm of the scientist, or the scholar in secular learning, or the student of art, or music. For the most part, and to an extent little dreamed of, they confine their attention, their studies, their researches, their thinking, and their pulpit performances, to a very *narrow* range—to a comparatively *few topics**—and these not often of a high doctrinal character, but familiar subjects, the hackneyed themes of pulpit declamation, on the practical, common duties of life—all-important in their place, but calling for very little thought, and no research at all in the preparation. And even these themes would be made a hundred fold *more* interesting, to themselves and to their hearers, and *more* potent on practical life, if they were based on a carefully-studied and masterly exposition of *doctrine*, in its Divine essence and wide applications.

But the average student and preacher of the Word, is content to stroll along the shore of divine truth (to borrow Newton's happy illustration) and gather here and there a curi-

* Not a few preachers, and among the number perhaps the reader himself, would be greatly surprised at the showing, if he would take the trouble to write down on paper a complete list of the topics or distinct subjects discussed by him in the pulpit, say for the past year, and then during his entire ministry, it may be of ten, twenty or fifty years.

ous pebble, while the great ocean of God's truth, crowded with richest argosies of heavenly treasure, lies before him, all unexplored and unknown. Instead of grasping the great system of revealed truth, bathed in the wondrous light of the Cross, and radiant with the glory of Divine Majesty, and unfolding its several intimately-related parts, from time to time, in a *series* of discourses, carefully and skillfully arranged, and which would demand on his part original and fresh investigation, earnest study, and vigorous consecutive thinking, in the preparation, but which would amply reward the expenditure; the common practice is to select, often by chance, some isolated text, which can be exhausted in a half hour's "talk;" or a theme which has been suggested by the *newspaper*, perhaps discussed in it, which can be made "interesting," even "entertaining," and, possibly so handled as absolutely to cause a "sensation"—costing the preacher really no mental labor, and lacking in all the elements of a Divine spiritual power.

The newspaper, to which reference has been made, has suddenly developed into one of the leading forces on the field of human thought and life. As a factor in our estimate of the causes which have wrought the many and great changes which have occurred, and are occurring before our eyes and in our own experience, with such extraordinary rapidity—changes which actually revolutionize men's ideas, and the social, political, and religious life of the world, and suggest the tremendous possibilities of the future—it is not sufficiently taken into the reckoning of the ministry of the Word, in its application to the sacred calling. Already is it a factor of amazing potency, even on the field of theology, and in relation to all the questions and issues involved in divine revelation. And yet this power is in its infancy. But still it already sways an immense and everywhere felt influence on the pulpit. The needs and demands of it, the character of its performances, its functions, methods, and failures, are freely and daily discussed. The sacred profession is made *conscious* of this surveillance, and of the power of this agency in its every relation to the pulpit, and to society. It invades the pastor's *study*, and unconsciously shapes the thoughts, the studies, the selection of the theme, the manner of handling it, and the way and time of

preaching it. It gets into the *pulpit* often, and gives tone, and manner, and expression, and coloring, and emphasis to the utterances of the Sabbath. It seats itself in the *pew*, and freely criticises the preacher,—his style, his dress and personal appearance, his theme, his doctrine, the merits or demerits of the sermon,—and often with ability and effect. And the next morning, it may be, the sermon will be "reported" in a leading daily, or at least, an outline of it with the reporter's criticisms. It hesitates not to dictate (for modesty is not among its virtues) to the schools of sacred learning, to discuss "creeds," and systems of religious belief, and the methods of preaching and instruction, and all the ethical, doctrinal, and professional questions connected with the sacred calling.

3. The *timidity* of the preachers of the Word is not the least of the causes which have contributed to produce the superficial, impotent theology of the day. "Timidity has cursed and killed a multitude of ministers," says one of the most popular and trenchant writers of our time.* They do not seriously attempt to stand alone in the dignity and strength of their individual manhood. They are content to go in "leading-strings" all their lives. They either lack the courage, or the ambition to think for themselves. They prefer to slide along in the ruts and grooves made by the thinking of other men. They will not venture a step, or assert an opinion, or write a sermon, until they have consulted all the "commentaries" † at

*Dr. Theodore L. Cuyler, in the *New York Evangelist*. No writer of our day probably has used his pen more extensively, or more effectively, in the interest of practical religion, than the Pastor of Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church, Brooklyn. And the same qualities which make his brief papers so spicy, so readable, and so popular, in the true sense of that abused word, make his sermons so interesting, and his ministry so eminently successful. Our young ministers might read and study these papers to advantage. They are simple, clear, terse, practical, scriptural, intensely spiritual, faithful in dealing with the conscience, and aimed straight at the mark, with all the force of a determined purpose, and a loving, sympathizing heart.

† Was there ever such a rage for "commentaries!" Our libraries will soon scarcely contain them! And they are so huge in proportion! Scott, and Henry, and Doddridge, and Clarke, are "nowhere" in these prolific times. A minister needs a fortune to possess them

hand, hunted up learned "authorities," entrenched themselves in "precedents," just like the lawyer in preparing his "briefs" —although not for so good a reason. They never think of taking the *Word of God* as their one and all-sufficient authority and guide, and unhesitatingly follow its ascertained teachings, without fear, or shrinking, or asking leave of any man, or any creed, or school, wheresoever it logically leads — content to have, in every sermon, every proposition, every service undertaken for the Master, as their sole warrant, a "thus saith the Lord."

This vicious *habit* in the ministry is doubtless acquired mainly under the system of *theological training*, which is now well nigh universal in the church. It is beyond question an evil, and one of serious consequence, growing out of the atmosphere and methods practiced in our theological schools. Not *necessarily* so, it may be, but yet practically so, without exception. To such an *extent* is it true; so marked and general is the effect, that an intelligent, close observer will not find it difficult—from his style of mental culture, his form of doctrinal statement and cast of theology, and his modes and manner of expression,—to determine *which* of our particular schools of sacred learning graduated the young divine.

This mental habit is the *bane of all the professions*, the Medical and the Law, as well as the Ministry. It is surprising, to one who looks into this matter, to note in them all

all; and a life-time to read and digest them all. And then they are so "excellent," so "learned," so crowded with the "treasures of thought," and so "endorsed," and with such a multitude of great names on the title page that "no minister can afford to be without them!" A popular commentary—the latest type of commentary—why it is the work of a *score* or two of men in both hemispheres; and none but a great publishing house can stand under the weight of it!

And is the Bible so hard a book to understand, as this would imply? Or is it because students and preachers of it, are too incompetent to comprehend the sacred text, or too mentally indolent to "search the Scriptures" for themselves? Or is it because they have not independence enough to form and hold an opinion, or teach a doctrine, unless it is first endorsed by learned authorities, or elaborated in a dozen of the latest commentaries? Explain it as you will, it is a significant sign of the times. These numerous and stupendous commentaries must find purchasers, or they would not so readily command publishers.

the power of "*authorities*," to shackle the mind, and forbid and repress independent investigation and reasoning—authorities, too, often obsolete, inconsistent, stupid, worthless, contravening the first and soundest principles of wisdom and judgment. And yet the profession, age after age, will bow down to them and "pin their faith to them," and never outgrow their repressing and oppressive influence. *How little really independent investigation, and thinking, and reasoning, is there in the world*, even in quarters where it is supremely demanded by the highest considerations, and where God, and the church, and the good of society, have a right to look for it! Never shall I forget an illustration of its power and absurdity, which came under my own observation in my boyhood, and which has had a thousand counterparts in human experience.*

This unmanly and pernicious habit is *inexcusable in any man*, in any profession or business, and most of all so in a *minister* of the Lord Jesus Christ, and a preacher of the Divine Word. It is a hundred-fold more *hurtful*, also, than in the case of the lawyer, or doctor, or business man. For it tends greatly to lessen men's interest in religion. It tends to keep multitudes of sinners from attending on the regular services of the sanctuary. It acts to diminish the power of the preached Word, which is the chief ordained instrumentality for the salvation of men. And, as a legitimate consequence, in a multitude of instances, it is the occasion of the failure of the Gospel to bring sinners to Christ, notwithstanding its ample provision of grace, and its pressing claims. And finally, such a habit tends to beget a sickly, sentimental, lifeless form of piety in the Church of Christ. It is inexcusable in the *minister* for the obvious reason that he possesses, what cannot be said of any other profession or service—a *full and infallible text-book* for his guidance, which he has sworn in his ordination vows implicitly to follow in all cases; and also an inward divine illuminator and guide, to qualify him to understand it, and intelligently administer it, even the Spirit of Truth itself. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him." James 1: 5. We are absolutely, therefore, without excuse, if we fail to un-

* See Appendix, Section 3.

derstand and interpret aright, and skillfully and effectively apply the Word, in the sphere of our high calling. No plea of modesty, or lack of ability, will avail in the sight of God. The minister of the sanctuary is never so entirely in accord with the highest standard of wisdom and truth; so strong, mentally, spiritually, morally; so assured of being in the right, in the way of duty, as when he sticks most closely and simply to his one professional Text-book, and exalts and magnifies its teachings, as the end of all controversy, and the sum and substance of all reasoning. Indeed, it is only so far forth as he does cleave to this heavenly guide, in the outward word, and in the inward witnessing Spirit; only so far as he draws his doctrines, his arguments, and his inspiration, as well as his text and subject from the holy oracles—constantly appeals to them, as the ultimate authority—backs up his statements, clinches his arguments, and enforces his appeals to the hearts and consciences of his hearers, by well-chosen texts of Scripture—it is only so far forth that he is a *safe* guide to the souls entrusted to his keeping.

Are we to assume that the *limits* of research into the meaning, and relations, and applications of God's Word, have *already been reached*, and that the most we can aspire to do in all the future, is simply to follow in the old beaten paths of exposition, and tradition? Is there no ground to pray for and expect, as the millennial age of the church draws nigh, that "new light will break forth from God's word"—not the light of any new doctrine, as the sacred canon is complete; not the light of a clearer and fuller revelation of essential principles (we need it not)—but the light of a clearer and stronger *vision*, as we turn the eye of faith, and the prayer of longing hearts up into the starry firmament of celestial truths, in the centre of which the Sun of Righteousness displays the infinite splendors of his mediatorial power? Are we not to expect a broadening of views, and expectations, and experiences, as we are enabled to trace the signs of "His appearing," for whom the ages wait, and on whose account "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together"—the glad signs of

"The growing empire of our King,"

and the wider and yet wider relations of His kingdom to earth and heaven, sun and stars, time and eternity, all progress, all achievement, all fruition, now and hereafter? For one I doubt not that the divine *Word*, which is the guide of the church through the whole wilderness of this world, will be honored even in *Heaven;* will be studied there, in the light of the Throne, in the light of all past experiences, and dispensations; and that *new* beauty, and sweetness, and glory will be continually breaking forth from its pages, as its truths eternally broaden out in their relations, and experiences, and achieved results. Dr. Carroll gives terse and eloquent expression to a thought on this point in his "Introduction" to Jenkyn on the Atonement.

"Is it an unreasonable conjecture that there are yet some 'hidings of the power' of eternal love in the atonement, which shall be sought and found and brought out in their sway upon the hearts of apostate men for their salvation —that there are yet the reserved glories of infinite mercy there which some mind favored of God shall discover and disclose to the world when its vision is sufficiently pure and piercing to behold them? Is it too much to hope for, that under the power of that Spirit which 'searcheth all things, yea, *the deep things of God,*' the intellect of the church will yet be trained to see the atonement of Christ in a new and celestial light, and in new and mightier relations to earth and to the universe? It must be admitted that the system of revealed truth is complete, and that no new disclosures of revelation are to be expected. But this does not prove that the human mind has yet contemplated all the truths of that system in all their great and more extended relations. The system of the material creation was as perfect when God spake it into being and pronounced it very good, as it is now. And like the system of revealed truth, its obvious facts and their immediate relations were known as soon as there was an intelligent mind on earth to contemplate them. But this does not prove that Adam, Noah, or Abraham, was as great an astronomer as Newton, or that either of them ever saw or understood many of the laws and relations of matter which were perfectly familiar to this prince of science."—pp. xi, xii.

When we take into view the *extent* to which this habit prevails, and its strong and natural tendency, is it any wonder that we have so few *great* preachers, or commanding intellects, in any of the professions or walks of life? so few grand exponents and leaders of human thought? We shall *never* have such a class of men, at least in any considerable number, until this state of things shall be broken up. The generation to come will be a generation of intellectual pigmies, not giants. Our mills of ministerial supply will continue to grind out men after the stereotyped pattern, poorly fitted, by discipline and mental furniture, ideals and methods instilled into them, to cope with the live, aggressive, multiform, and powerful forces which are sure to confront them wheresoever they pitch their tent, and to contest every inch of ground with them in the great battle which is already begun.

Not only is our popular Theology deficient of independent thinking, but it has in it, as I have already said, very little of the *Biblical element.* The good old habit of quoting scripture has greatly fallen into disuse. You will find sermons in any quantity without a word of scripture in them, save the text appended. And the cast, the thought, the whole expression and spirit of them, are remote from the biblical idea. Indeed, a text of scripture would be out of company in them. They are sermons for "the times," in which, as Dr. John Hall justly says, "they only imperfectly rival the newspapers and reviews." They are not God-sent messages to guilty and dying souls, burning and quivering with divine energy; arrows from God's quiver shot straight at the heart of impenitence with the power of the Holy Ghost.

Dr. William M. Taylor, in his recent volume on "Peter the Apostle," gives expression to many pertinent and forcible thoughts on this subject. It contains twenty-three chapters which are evidently the substance of as many discourses preached upon the most notable and interesting events in the life of this early preacher. And the reader of them will cease to wonder at the power which this eminent foreign preacher wields in the pulpit. They are replete with scriptural truth, uttered with the authority which is backed by a "thus saith

the Lord," challenging assent and obedience as such, and as spoken by the ambassador of God. And here lies the open secret of their power. And I may add, here lies the secret of the remarkable power of other notable instances in ministers called from abroad. The scripturalness of their preaching is a marked feature. They preach less in the abstract and more in the concrete forms of life, experience, and example which is held forth in the Bible. Thus they are constantly holding up the Bible as a glass through which men may see themselves, their own character and lives, whether good or evil, and verify the truth of God's Word by their own daily experience. American preachers might study such models with great advantage.

Dr. Taylor, in this volume, gives forth his own ideas on this subject in his portraiture of the preaching of Peter and others. Of Peter's Pentecostal sermon he says:

"This discourse was eminently biblical. He brought the Bible to the front, and by its simple exposition he proved that Jesus of Nazareth was indeed the Messiah. Now-a-days we have a great deal said in the pulpit that might be just as appropriate in the hall of the layman, or in a class-room of a professor of philosophy. But Peter began and ended with the Word of God. And when our preachers will give over apologizing for the Bible, or criticising it, and will let it simply speak for itself, then we, too, may look back for a new day of Pentecost. What mean the crowds that everywhere throng to hear those evangelists whom God has so signally honored? They are the proof if men only are to be convinced, that no book is so interesting to the common people as the Word of God, and that no magnet is so potent as the attraction of the cross."—pp. 182, 3.

Of John the Baptist, he says:

"He had the grand old Tishbite's peculiar power. He knew neither fear nor favor. He called things by their right names; and though he had dwelt so long in the desert, he let his hearers feel that he had not forgotten the evils which he had seen practiced in the cities. He aimed right at their consciences, and spoke in plain and unmistakable terms of the sins with which they were chargeable. He knew nothing of that simpering propriety, all be-gloved and sleek, which has chloroformed so many modern preachers; but he exposed, in words as unadorned as his own camlet robe, the iniquities of his hearers, and called upon them there and then to repent."—pp. 8, 9.

The theology of the day, as articulated in sermons, and creeds, and literature, bears quite too much the impress of *man*, rather than of God. It is Augustine, Calvin, or Arminius, often, in a higher sense than it is Jesus Christ and him crucified. It is amazing—the work of the *Schoolmen*—in shaping it, defining it, articulating it, fettering and repressing it, and often killing the very life of it! The war of the Creeds, the "Standards of Faith," the Formularies of Doctrine, and the "Platforms," has often been fiercer than the war against sin and the Devil! The spirit of controversy, the influence of "Systems of Divinity," and of "Polemics," have been more powerful factors in the Church than the Holy Spirit and incarnated Love! Is it surprising that the *apostolic* preachers were content to preach simply "the glorious Gospel of the blessed God," in its divine simplicity, and freeness, and fullness, just as it came down out of heaven to them, without any adjuncts, or glosses, or formularies from man? Surely, if ever the gospel was preached "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power," it was so preached by Paul and his compeers. And yet you cannot find the slightest trace of this modern element in one of them. His epistles are grandly doctrinal; argumentative in the highest degree; full of the marrow and pith of revealed truth. And yet he is always clear, intelligent, positive, emphatic. He did not preach a philosophy, but a revealed, God-enunciated religion; preached *fact*, not a matter of "doubtful disputation"—the fact that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief;" not a "system" of scientific religious faith, but "repentance towards God and faith towards the Lord Jesus Christ," as the only Saviour of the world. And, exalted as he was as "the great apostle to the Gentiles," and master as he was of the "wisdom" of the world, he would "glory in nothing," know nothing "save the cross of Christ," by which he was "crucified," not only to sin, but also to all human distinctions, and ambitions. Paul's theology was simply the theology of the Divine Word in its own simplicity and grandeur.

The popular theology of our time is, to a great extent, a *negative* rather than a *positive* theology. The "trumpet gives an uncertain sound." "We cannot say that God may not save

all his creatures." "We will not assert that in the other world there may not be a chance for a poor belated sinner." "We dare not affirm that Christ who preached to the spirits in prison may not preach to others." These are but specimens. This is the form and the spirit of the new theology. If it were a matter of *modesty*—delicacy on the part of the preacher in giving expression to his *personal* opinions—it would not be offensive—it might be commendable. But *modesty* has nothing to do with it. Such language comes from men, and the major part of them comparatively *young* men, who do not hesitate to array themselves against the traditional doctrines of the Christian Church. Besides, the preacher has nothing to do with his *personal* opinions. They are not factors in the problem of salvation. It is of little consequence what they are, in matters of faith. He is set to teach *God's truth*, and whole truth; and not the views of any man, or any body of men. And this he is to declare boldly, *authoritatively*, as God's *ambassador*, "whether men will hear or whether they will forbear."

It is *doubt* and not modesty which finds expression in this type of preaching. And "he that doubteth is damned!" There is no type of theology more *ruinous* to souls than this very type. It is worse in its effects than open, absolute unbelief. It is also in singular contrast with the Word of God. The Bible is a book of *affirmations*, not negations. Christ, the living Word, incarnated in the flesh, as well as in the Scriptures, is Absolute Truth. There is no doubt, no uncertainty, no qualification, no "subjunctive mood," in Him. "An empirical theology, whether of the pulpit, or the press which offers doubt in place of positive conviction, offers chaff for grain, a stone for bread." An apologetic attitude, or tone and style in preaching, now so common, tends to rob the truth of its chief elements of power. Said a woman to me once – a woman of fashion and extreme worldliness—after listening to a certain preacher: "I like that man much." Expressing my surprise, she responded: "Because I KNOW HE BELIEVES every word he preaches. He has no ifs or may-be-sos. He makes no apology for giving you God's message. He just says, 'There, that's God's truth; take it, believe it, obey it without question, on peril of your damnation.'"

Paul *knew* whom he believed. His faith was a positive faith. The Christ in whom he trusted, was not a "hope" merely, a vague idea or doctrine, an historical personage simply; but a living, divine, indwelling Presence and Power. And he was not ashamed to assert this experimental fact, and preach and glory in it, and bear testimony to it—in Jerusalem, in Corinth, and Ephesus, and even in imperial Rome; not only among his converts and brethren, but in prison, "in bonds," in Cæsar's household, and in the hour of martyrdom! He "lived as seeing Him who is invisible"—as seeing Jesus in his wondrous character—Jesus hanging on the cross and dying for him—Jesus in the resurrection and ascension scenes—Jesus on the Throne of the heavenly glory, and descending in the clouds of heaven to judge the world. So clear and strong was his vision that all these tremendous events were ever-present realities to him. O the power of an ever-conscious presence, and such a Presence as the glorious living Redeemer! O the power of absolute truth when dominant in the soul, and such a truth as is incarnated in Jesus Christ!

SECTION II.

MINISTERIAL EDUCATION: THEOLOGICAL SEMINARIES.

Whatever relates to the Christian ministry is of vital moment to the entire church, and radically concerns the future of the world, and of Christianity. The ministry has given life to the church in every age, and instrumentally determined her spiritual condition and progress. And what has been true of the past, is true of the present, and will be true of the future. Determine the question of what the ministers of the Gospel, of this and of coming generations, shall be, in point of character, ability, fitness, soundness in doctrine, and loyalty to the Master, and you essentially determine the measure of the progress of Christ's kingdom on earth. Hence no subject which occupies the attention of the Christian world to-day, is of greater practical importance than that of Ministerial Education. And to

discuss ministerial education is of course to discuss the methods and results of theological seminaries, as they are now the chief agency in this work.

In considering this subject several distinct yet related inquiries arise, viz.: Have these institutions answered reasonable expectations? Is the generation of teachers, evangelists and pastors educated by them for the sacred profession, so trained and adapted to the requirements of the times as to secure the best possible results? How far are they responsible for the alarming defections from the faith which are occurring, and for the admitted decline of spiritual power and success on the part of the evangelical pulpit? Do the signs of the times call for any essential change of method or agency in order to increased adaptability and efficiency in the sacred profession; and if so, is the present system susceptible of such modifications and improvements as may seem to be needful in the present and prospective condition of things?

These questions are *pertinent* to the existing state of the ministry and of the church at large. They agitate and burden many hearts which love our Lord Jesus Christ and are anxious to see his cause advance. A proper discussion of the matter will tend to allay any existing uneasy feeling, if there be found to be no ground for it; and also to correct any evil tendencies that may have crept into our methods. I have no sympathy with any movement to cast suspicion on the present doctrinal teaching in any of our seminaries. As a class our theological professors take high rank in scholarship, in Christian character, and in respect to the qualities requisite to their responsible positions. It is not therefore the *personnel* of these institutions on which objection can be fairly based. The question I raise relates to the *system* itself – the methods now well-nigh universal for raising up and educating the ministers of Religion.

I may say without presumption that I have been in favorable circumstances to observe the practical working and outcome of the system for half a century in several leading branches of the church. And while I do not fail to recognize the eminent service which these schools of sacred learning have rendered to the ministry and to Christian learning, yet

fidelity to my convictions constrains me to withhold unqualified approval so far as they relate to the supreme end for which they were instituted. As the result of close and friendly observation, I am constrained to feel that the practical results of the system fall vastly below what is needed, and what might justly be expected of them: That the generation of ministers put into the field under it fails in some important respects to meet the peculiar demands of the age: That, incidentally at least, the present system is in a measure responsible for the inroads of skepticism in the evangelical fold, and of the comparative impotence of the American pulpit as it respects the conversion of souls, considering its numerical strength, its high culture, and its augmented appliances and forces: That the present condition and tendency of things, in the ministry itself, and in the church and world at large, do call upon the friends of a spiritual and aggressive Christianity to inquire what, if anything, can be done to increase the power of the Pulpit as God's ordained instrumentality for the conversion of the world. That the pulpit has *declined*, in the estimation of the public, and in its saving effects on the world, will not be denied by intelligent men. How far is this deplorable fact the outcome of our system of ministerial education?

It is a question whether there is *elasticity* enough in our present system of training the teachers and preachers of Christianity to adapt them to the "new order" of things. A mere book training, stereotyped methods, and historical models, however well they may have answered for the past, will not suffice for the day in which we live, or for the days that are coming upon the world. Modern thought and life are so greatly *changed*, that old methods of influencing and controlling them are well-nigh powerless. The attitude of the world toward religion, toward the ministry itself, toward everything supernatural; and men's modes of thinking and lines of development, and all the moral and religious conditions and forces of society, are essentially different from what they were when theological seminaries were established and the present methods adopted. And a generation *hence* still greater changes will have passed over the whole face of society and over the out-

ward life of the church. No one doubts this. It needs no prophet to foretell it. And yet the church is educating her ministers to-day after a rigid uniform system of education devised and adopted seventy years ago!

Now it needs no argument to prove that a fixed, uniform, cast-iron agency to furnish the Church of Christ with a qualified and effective ministry, is quite sure to fail. It cannot be otherwise, in the nature of things. Qualities, gifts, methods, adapted to a past generation, are not effective in the present, and will be less so in the next. Each generation, almost each decade of years, has its own work, its own tremendous problems to solve, its own great battles to fight; and Christ's ministers, in order to effective service, must be practically trained with special reference to the actual current condition of things. The nature and intensity of the conflict which is *now* upon us, and which is sure to wax fiercer as the century hastens to a close, calls for trained men and choice weapons—well-tempered and tried steel, in the sturdy hands of disciplined and skilled soldiers. For it is no *sham* fight that we are in for—it is the culmination of the battle of the ages. The hosts of hell are marshaled and marshaling, as never before, in array against Christ and his kingdom; and weapons that may have answered once are worthless to-day. Tactics, equipments, men, that may have done good service in other days, are antiquated now. They cannot cope successfully with the enemies, the weapons, the tactics, the new forces, which now confront and assault the Christian church all along the front, and from a thousand masked batteries within her own lines. A fixed, procrustean, restricted system of training must of necessity fail in the matter of adaptation. And adaptation in the work of the ministry is half the battle. There was never a period when *variety* of gifts and methods and appliances and weapons was so called for in assaulting the kingdom of Satan. The aggressive warfare which the church is providentially called upon to wage demands a kind of talent and training such as theological seminaries do not now give us, and never will, unless their methods are changed. There is characteristic common-sense and sound judgment in a stirring address of Dr. John Hall, before the London (Eng.) Presbytery last July: "They should

cultivate elasticity. The very existence of the Salvation Army, with its peculiarities and irregularities—its very existence and success was a testimony to a great felt need, and perhaps a suggestion to the churches that they should not so much rely upon cast-iron as elastic agencies, through which to spread the Gospel of our blessed Lord."

Our colleges, and other educational institutions of a secular kind, are wiser in their generation than the children of light. For they have yielded to the pressure. The modern spirit has invaded the venerable faculties of Harvard, and Yale, and Princeton, and wrought great changes not only in their curriculum, but in the spirit and methods of instruction, adapting them to the changed condition of things without. They have substituted india-rubber bands for the cast-iron bands of former ages. And as sure as the spirit of the nineteenth century is "turning and overturning" men's ideas and habits and conditions in relation to religion, so sure will the ministry of the future greatly suffer for the lack of adaptability, and consequently of success, in winning souls and extending Christ's kingdom, if the present system is to be preserved intact.

It is wise to appeal to *experience* in this matter. The present mode has been in use long enough, and on a scale broad enough, to warrant an appeal to its fruits as a test of its merits. Is such a test satisfactory? I do not believe that many intelligent men who have given attention to the subject, are satisfied with the practical outcome of it, although they may approve of it in theory; satisfied with it as a whole, taking into the estimate its cost, and the character, qualifications and present measure of success in the sacred calling. If ever there was a time which called for men of *practical* minds, and sagacious spirit, and sturdy sense, and heroic character, and invincible will, and a determined purpose to live and work for Christ and a dying world, that time is now. There is no work in this age for a ministry of a different type. Men are terribly in earnest in sinning, in lusting after the world, in business and in pleasure: and the Devil is terribly in earnest in the work of seduction. And so must the preacher be an earnest, practical man, and wise in his methods to win souls,

or signally fail of success. But do our schools graduate a class of ministers thus distinguished?

If ever there was a period in the moral history of the world when the ministers of the sanctuary were specially urged to uplift the Cross and glory in it as the one hope of man, the one regenerating force in human society, that crisis is upon the church now. But do the men who come forth from these high seats of sacred learning come "determined," like Paul, to "know nothing save Christ and him crucified;" come with this single lofty purpose subordinating all other aims and ambitions, and consecrating all their attainments and gifts to the one self-denying work of making the world Christian? And if there ever was a day when the Inspired Book should be brought to the front, and honored and emphasized by the ministers of religion, and when they need to be "rooted and grounded" in it, "mighty in the Scriptures," and know how to handle it skillfully, and how to make it the wisdom and power of God unto salvation, we live in that day. But is the present method the best possible to secure this result? Is it as good as the old? Are our young men, as matter of fact, educated into a higher veneration for the one inspired and revealed book, and into a profounder faith in and a deeper personal experience of its power? For one I confess to grave doubts on this point. I have personally known two students at least, who graduated from different seminaries confirmed skeptics. One of them entered the ministry for a brief time, was reclaimed from his unbelief and soon after died. The other never sought license, and is a social and moral wreck, with talents that would have raised him to eminence but for the poison imbibed from some source during his seminary course. And I apprehend the number who imbibe skeptical views in the course of training is larger than we suspect. And is it not fair to infer one of two things? Either the influences centering in a seminary course are not just what they should be; or the habits of personal piety in the students are not sufficiently looked after. I suspect both of these causes operate to produce such a sad result.

The last point is of supreme moment. A moral and spiritual decline or defection usually precedes a doctrinal one. The heart is more at fault than the head. And, from the na-

ture of the case, the association together of a large body of young men for several years, away from home influences, and from church relations and exposed to the temptations often of city life, and various associations, is a severe strain on the morals, and the spirituality of the students. We know how severe the ordeal is during *college* life, and how many young men are corrupted in their principles and morals. And theological students are but men, immature, inexperienced, susceptible men; and need, under the circumstances into which they are thrown, a vigilant watch, a faithful spiritual oversight, the strong, steady influence of a *pastor's personal magnetism and intercourse*—the systematic husbandry of the most effective spiritual agency.

"As to the danger of decay of piety, it is greater than all other dangers united. All our impressions are received passively; all the atmosphere is literary; all exercises are subjected to criticism; all is intellect, speculation: nothing to draw out active piety. Our studies too are pressing, more pressing than I had anticipated. We have as many as six or eight irons in the fire continually." * If this was true at Andover forty years ago, it is true probably in every particular in all our theological seminaries at the present time. So far certainly, as "studies" are concerned, they are more "pressing" now than then because a much larger range of studies is crowded into the like number of years. And no one will claim that there has been a change for the better in any of the other items.

And just *here*, at this very vital point, is the weakest spot in our present system. No one will claim that the *demand* of the condition is now fairly *met*, even in our best appointed seminaries. There is nothing equivalent to the *old* system where the student was under the immediate eye of his instructor, commonly a member of his family, and in close contact with his church relations. The eye of the public too was upon him; and his personal piety, both in its inward life and outward expression, was matter of great and constant concernment. But *now* this vital matter receives comparatively very little attention. The necessity for something more and better

* Dr. John Todd. The Story of his Life, p. 125.

in this direction is felt, and often confessed; but altogether inadequate provision is made by the church for so essential a service. And this is the more remarkable in view of the fact, that of late years special provision has been made for studies that are only *collateral*, and that in no sense can be considered *essential* to a theological course. If the necessity I speak of were duly *felt* and *urged* by those to whom this great work is committed by the church, the spirit of liberality which has often given in so princely a way to endow or build these sacred halls, would provide the means to supply this great deficiency.

There is not a *professor's chair half so important in a theological school as a pastor's supervision*, solemnly charged with the moral and spiritual welfare of the whole body of students, giving his entire care, and time, and strength to the cultivation and development of their religious character and habits.

If this duty were done, and done thoroughly, and faithfully, and the standard of personal piety and consecration among the students, kept at high-water mark, there would be comparatively little danger of doctrinal defection arising from the contact of so many minds yet in their formative state, and from the kind and methods of studies pursued during their educational course. Sure I am that we should not be so often pained and shocked, as we now are. For it has become a quite frequent occurrence for a presbytery, a council, or an association, to decline to license, or ordain, or install a candidate, on the ground of admitted or alleged defection from the acknowledged standards of evangelical faith. And even when the application is granted, the wisdom of it is sometimes doubted.—Such a class of facts, multiplying with alarming frequency, and confined, for the most part, to the younger part of the ministry, and to those just seeking to enter it, is very suggestive, and cannot fail, sooner or later, to call for investigation as to the cause.

Another defect in the present system, intimately related to the one named above, relates to the Inspired Word. High as the place assigned to it confessedly is, in the whole course of instruction, yet, practically, it is not the one supreme factor,

the one all-permeating, all-controlling influence. It is not guarded with a jealousy so intense and ubiquitous as to strike down the hand that dares to touch it, or trifle with it, in any way, by any agency, in the name of any creed, or sect, or theory, or philosophy, or school of "criticism"—its inspiration, its authenticity, its all-sufficiency as a rule of faith. It is not studied *enough*, nor with sufficient *thoroughness*, and *reverence* for its Divine authority, in order to fill the student with the spirit of it, and make him a master in the use of its weapons, that his whole being may be saturated with it, and he be able to vindicate it, and magnify it, and preach it, with the power of demonstration. So wide is the present range of studies; so much time is devoted to collateral and subordinate matters; to such an extent is the habit of philosophizing carried, so much scope is given to a "liberal" spirit and free criticism; and so much literary ambition is fostered, in one way or another, that THE WORD is not always *practically* honored and magnified as the *one* source of moral and saving power, the *one* spiritual force and weapon in the heart and hand of the preacher.

God forbid that I should charge this defect against our theological seminaries as a thing of design, or wanton neglect. It arises mainly from the circumstances of the case, and is not perhaps sufficiently guarded against. But the essential defect is brought out painfully, as all must admit, in the examinations of candidates for licensure, and even in the closing examinations of the seminaries. How often it is notoriously true that they are not able to cite the appropriate Scripture texts to prove a scripture doctrine! And the same lack of familiarity with the Scriptures—even the "letter" of them, to say nothing of the "spirit," which is "life," and the relations of scripture to scripture, and the true exegesis of it—is painfully shown in the modern pulpit, and notably so, in the younger portion of the ministry. Such undeniable facts tell their own story.

There has also insensibly crept into the present system of theological education a habit of *theorizing* which, carried to excess, cannot be otherwise than hurtful. Theorizing, in our day, is reduced to a science. It is universal. There is a "theory" for every fact, every opinion, every doctrine in the

world, and usually a good many of them. The spirit is rampant in our theology, and in the whole range of religious thought, and inquiry. Everything is reduced to a "theory." *Inspiration* is a "theory," and there are so many, and such conflicting theories, held and taught by the schoolmen, and the whole matter is so overlaid, or confused by theological and philosophical speculations *about* inspiration, that the mind of the student is confused, and the *fact* of inspiration, the only thing essential to it, is well-nigh lost sight of, or at least becomes a subordinate consideration.

The *atonement* is a "theory," and there are so many theories as to its extent, and relations, and philosophical, and metaphysical aspects, that the transcendent *fact* is stript of much of its power. In like manner the awful fact of *sin*—sin in man, sin in the world—is contemplated and studied in the light of numberless "theories," as to its origin, and the reasons for its existence, and God's relations to the problem of moral evil, and our relations to Adam as the federal head of the race, and whether man is "totally depraved" or not; and so zealous and absorbed have our religious teachers been in discussing these philosophical aspects of the awful subject, that the tremendous *fact* itself—the everywhere existing, ruining, damning power of sin, has been too often comparatively overlooked, or only partially apprehended.

The very *structure of the Scriptures* has become a matter of "theory," in our day, and we have any number of "schools." And under the influence of a world of "criticism," "higher" and "lower" which such an attitude invites, the traditional beliefs of the ages in relation to chronology, authorship, and how composed, and kindred questions, are swept away, and with them portions of the sacred volume, and the faith of the church is shaken in the entirety of God's Word.

And the same is true of *every* doctrine of the Bible. You are confronted with a thousand and one "theories" of the schoolmen, and the philosophies of human wisdom, the moment you enter upon the study of any of these divine subjects. They are not viewed, studied, held, taught, preached as divine and eternal verities, declared to the world by God himself, the ultimate wisdom, and to be received by faith in the spirit of

little children: but they are contemplated, and taught, and preached, rather in the light of human reason, human philosophizing, human formularies of statement. It is wonderful the *contrast* of the cardinal doctrines of Scripture as they are made to appear after being subjected to these human tests, and to pass through the alembic of human philosophies; and those same doctrines as they stand forth on the pages of the Gospel, in the majesty and grandeur of divine simplicity and authority.

And the sad *effects* of a system of ministerial education which gives full scope to this method of investigating and teaching the Word of Salvation are conspicuous in much of the theology, and biblical literature of the day. It gives *character* to our preaching and religious thinking. You may trace the influence of it in deep lines everywhere. And the habit tends, inevitably, to skepticism, by subtle processes which evade observation. Such a method bewilders, and confuses the mind of a student; and takes from the Word its divinest elements of power.*

*Since writing the above I have noted a movement that indicates dissatisfaction with the existing state of things, so far as it concerns one large and influential branch of the Church, and a determination to apply a corrective. I allude to the action of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in session at Springfield, Ill., May, 1882. This action was taken on the report of the "Standing Committee on Theological Seminaries." It is as follows:

"That in view of crude and dangerous utterances of many of the secular and religious papers, periodicals, and books, and of some of the pulpits of the land, resulting from the introduction and prevalence of German mysticism and higher criticism, and of philosophic speculations and so-called scientific evolution; in view of the alarming defections from the faith of the Gospel, both in this country and abroad, and which seriously threaten our own beloved Church; and in view of the fact that the revealed Word of God, the Holy Scriptures, is the only infallible rule of faith and practice, and therefore the only hope of mankind, your Committee recommend that this Assembly, in the name of the great Head of the Church, solemnly warn all who give instruction in our theological seminaries against inculcating any views or adopting any methods which may tend to unsettle faith in the doctrine of the divine origin and plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, held by our Church or in our Presbyterian system of doctrine, either by ignoring or depreciating the supernatural element in divine revelation, or by exalting human conjecture and speculation above historical and divine facts and truths, or by applying hypotheses of evolution, unverified and incapable of verification, to the Word of the living God.

"That, while gratefully recognizing the revival of the missionary

The Church cannot *afford* to have this great agency for supplying her with an educated ministry *fail in any sense, or in any degree.* For it is *radical* in its relations to all her great interests. We have no machinery to supply its place, or even supply its deficiency, or to counteract the evils of the system, if such there come to be. Besides it is an extremely *costly* way to educate our ministry, both as it respects money and men. This of course should not be thought of, if the results are corresponding in magnitude and character. But *are* they?

During the last seventy years the American Church has invested a great *many millions of dollars* in buildings, endowments, libraries, scholarships, and other necessary appliances, in addition to the amount raised for salaries and current expenses of these numerous schools. Scores also of our ripest scholars, and, in many instances, our ablest preachers, who are greatly needed in other spheres, are required to man them.*

spirit in our seminaries, and the agencies by which it has been brought about, yet in view of the higher type of piety and the larger measure of consecration demanded of our Christian ministers of this age, in which all the world is waiting for God's salvation, the Assembly earnestly urges upon the professors in the seminaries the all-important duty of intelligently and assiduously cultivating the piety of the students under their charge, and seeking to fill and inspire them with the great truths and motives of the Word of God, which furnish the most powerful impulse in the work of saving souls, and of bringing the world to Christ."

This report was adopted "by a rising vote of the Assembly." The attempt to break the force of this well-meant, and timely warning, on the part of indiscreet friends of the seminaries, or individual professors, by means of newspaper editorials, and flippant, and facetious contributions, designed to bring ridicule on the Assembly and on all concerned in the action taken by it, will not avail. To say nothing of the bad taste and spirit shown, and the contemptuous flings at the Assembly itself, it is most unwise, and cannot fail to embitter a discussion which is inevitable. There is ground sufficient to warrant inquiry, and to challenge the attention of thoughtful observers of the times. The source and animus of these newspaper diatribes, it is not difficult to divine. There went up from a large portion of the ministry, and not a few of the intelligent laymen of the Church, a loud "Amen" to the action of the Assembly referred to; and ridicule, and invective, will not silence the voice which has spoken.

* I have taken the pains to ascertain, as nearly as possible, the cost

And, after all, is there room for so much as a *doubt* as to the wisdom of this enormous expenditure of money and talent and scholarship in order to secure the right kind of a ministry? After so long a time, must we still regard it in the light of an *experiment?* Is it a *question* still whether the generation of ministers which it has already put into our pulpits, and missionary fields, is manifestly *superior*, as to effectiveness, and to success in winning souls to Christ, and extending the kingdom of Christ—the sole test of worth—to the generations trained under the old régime?

to the church of instruction during the three years' course at a theological seminary, in one branch of our American Zion, the Presbyterian. I have selected this denomination because the official data was at hand on which to base the estimate. The expense in this branch of the church is probably a fair average of the whole. My figures are mainly taken from the last annual reports of these seminaries made to the General Assembly in May of the current year, and found in the published "Minutes" of the Assembly.

The number of Seminaries reported was 13 in all. The number of Professors 54, and Lecturers and Instructors 11. The whole number of students graduated during the year 165. And this was 24 more than during the previous year, and considerably in excess of the number likely to be graduated from the two remaining classes, in the coming two years. The income for the year, mainly from "endowment funds," was $220,717, which did not quite meet the expenses. Now to this must be added the interest on the large amount invested in buildings, libraries, and other appliances and appointments for the accommodation of the students.

Now with this data officially furnished us, it is easy to arrive at the cost in money, and in professors' services. Let us take the years '81 and '82, as giving us a fair average; and we have these results: The ratio to each professor is less than 2½ students! And the yearly cost of each student graduated, is over $1,800! And this public outlay remember, is restricted to the matter of instruction. It does not include any part of the student's personal expenses, nor the aid furnished to "indigent students" by the Education Board.

These figures are certainly appalling. The whole time and resources of an able and a complished professor spent upon 2½ graduates, including undergraduates, 8 in all, instructed by him. And each student entering the ministry, costing the church some $4,500 for 3 years tuition of 8 months each! This is immensely in excess of the expenses incurred for instruction at any *college* in the world. Can the church afford it? Can a system which entails such results embody the highest attainable wisdom?

And the *outlook* to-day, in reference both to the number, and the ability of our religious teachers, or their adaptability to the peculiarities of the age, and their sufficiency to sustain and carry forward the growing missionary work of the Church, both in the Home and the Foreign field—is it a *hopeful*, an *assured* one? Is there no ground for misgivings in the minds of those who make this subject matter of candid and earnest study? The *supply* question itself is a very serious and pressing one. Our population is increasing at a fearful ratio. A mighty and ceaseless tide of emigration is rolling in upon us from the old world, of all nationalities, enough to people several new States each year, and laying the foundations of future empire in our yet undeveloped West, and North-west, and South-west; and where are the men to come from to evangelize this mass of mind and life, teeming with strange ideas, and with habits often averse to our religious faith and institutions?

The ministry, in the meanwhile, is scarcely holding its own, in point of number; and, relatively to our growth as a people, is falling rapidly behind. And the proportion of really qualified and successful ministers to the whole number educated, observation clearly shows to be, whatever the cause, less than ever before. There was never before so large a number of educated ministers in secular callings; thrown aside by the fastidious tastes of the churches, and the rage for young men now so prevalent, and a manifest unfitness for the present order of things. And the ranks are to be thinned by an apparently widespread defection from doctrinal standards, as has once before taken place in New England.

No nation on earth ever had such a heritage given it as God has given to the great Republic of this Western continent. And no other nation will exert that measure of influence on the character and history of the race, as we are destined to wield. Our Future is looming up in proportions almost frightful to contemplate. Forces are gathering, and developing here, that will inevitably change the face of the world, in its political social, and religious condition. To say nothing of our enlarging and prosperous missions *abroad*, and the new fields which Providence is continually opening up, our HOME MISSION

interest is already vast beyond conception, and, prospectively, overshadows every other national question. The religious element; the extent to which this field will be cultivated during the next two or three decades of years, and the character of the men who are to be intrusted with the work, will be largely the factors that will determine the mighty problem of our national destiny. And it is in the light of such facts that the question under consideration assumes so grave an importance. *Peculiar* training is needed for this rough, frontier, foundation-work. Literary culture, the refinements of elegant scholarship, the methods of the schools, will accomplish little or nothing on such a field. Robustness of health and character; sturdy common sense, and practicality of mind; a thorough knowledge of men rather than of books; mastery of the Word, and how to give it effect in such surroundings, and on such a mixed population, and burning zeal in the Master's work—these are the qualities, above all others, to insure success. How and where are we to get the men of this stamp, and in sufficient number, to reap the grandest harvest that ever invited the reaper's sickle?

One of the greatest dangers incident to the present system arises from literary ambition. There is but a step from the college to the seminary. And the habits, ambitions and rivalries of the former are readily transferred to the latter. And are the atmosphere, the association, the conditions and methods and strifes of the two, essentially different? True, there is a change in the curriculum, but the surroundings are not very different, and the same motives and influences are likely to exist and operate in both. The studies are all of a professional character. Scholarship is the goal. Competition is rife. "All the atmosphere is literary; all exercises are subjected to criticism; all is intellect, speculation; nothing to draw out active piety." It is doubtful if ever, in the history of the church, literary culture, and scholarly attainments, and thirst for literary fame, filled so large a space and swayed so powerful an influence in the ranks of the Christian ministry, as at the present time. The evidence of this assertion is rife on every hand and in every sphere, and no well-informed man will deny it. And this result is natural. No little grace is needed to crucify

literary ambition during a three or four years' course of absorbing study, and familiar intercourse with a hundred or more fellow-students and a body of enthusiastic teachers, all intent on high culture and proficiency in a wide range of professional studies. Every possible precaution should certainly be taken to keep the mental, the intellectual, the merely professional, in rigid subjection, and to exalt, and emphasize, and make supreme, the spiritual and the religious. No man who understands human nature, no student of history, will presume to say that we are in no danger from this source. There are powerful tendencies everywhere at work, both in the seminary and in the church at large, to exalt human wisdom, to give undue prominence to scholastic training, to foster tastes and habits and standards adverse to a pure, simple, earnest Christian faith and life. And in view of such marked tendencies, and the manifest decline of religious doctrine and of the power of godliness in the body of believers, the fear is admissible that some of these liberally endowed and venerated seats of learning may drift from their original foundation and no longer educate a "godly ministry." It is not necessary to their perversion that they come to teach *errors* in doctrine, or countenance the schools of "destructive criticism." Let a worldly ambition dominate them; let culture or scholarship, or literary distinction, come to be the supreme pursuit, and it were better for the church that they should cease to be. The history of Harvard College furnishes an illustration in point.

The *critical spirit* is another source of danger which the church cannot too jealously and vigilantly guard against. The purely speculative in religion has come to occupy quite too much the attention of ministers and professors. The modern pulpit would wield a vastly greater influence if it preached the Gospel itself more, and less *about* it, and that simply upon the authority of the Bible, without turning aside to discuss or prove the authority. Criticism has its place in the system of ministerial education, in the pulpit, in the review and magazine and religious weekly. But it also has its limitations. It is liable to abuse. It *is* perverted or overdone in all these spheres, to the serious injury of truth and religion. The pulpit that freely criticises the Bible—its rendering, its chrono-

logy, its origin, or its statement of fact or doctrine—no matter for what end or motive—sows broadcast the seeds of distrust and unbelief. The review or journal that constantly assails, in one form or another, openly or covertly, the traditional faith of the church, and whose pages bristle with bold criticism on any and every current question held sacred by evangelical Christians, is an engine of mischief and destruction. And so with the schools of learning which educate our religious teachers. The worst spirit that can find a place there, is the spirit of an unrestrained, aggressive *criticism* in relation to God's inspired and revealed Word to man. Better *error* in its rankest forms; for that we can guard against, in a measure at least. That would shock the religious sense of God's people and call for speedy redress. But the spirit of arrogant criticism is so insidious in its approaches, so subtle and plausible in its methods; and its drift and ultimate effects may be so easily and completely disguised, that the mischief may be done before the danger is apparent to the public.

That the critical spirit has run riot everywhere in these days, goes without the saying. It is a marked and startling characteristic of the times. It pervades every circle. It is applied to every subject. Nothing in history, in religion, in society, in opinion or life, in antiquity or in the present, is too sacred for it to attack It sweeps with the force of a cyclone through our traditional faiths, and customs, reputations, and venerable institutions. The "schools of the prophets," have not wholly escaped. In Germany and elsewhere, some of them have been thoroughly rationalized by it. And our American schools are not beyond danger from the same source. Every study, every performance, is tested by it. It is rigid in its scrutiny. It is exacting in its demands. It is sweeping in its assertions. It knows no modesty. It is not troubled with scruples. It has no respect for the traditional beliefs of the church. It handles the "sacred oracles" as if they were a football. Every portion, and every claim of God's Word is scrutinized and tested by it, as if the revelation were but just made to the world, and must needs be confirmed by the canons of modern criticism before it can be accepted.

For years the student breathes this critical atmosphere.

Nothing pertaining to the Bible is settled. Speculation about it is constant. The faith of childhood, the faith inspired in the heart by the Spirit of God in conversion; the faith of the "great cloud of witnesses," in every age, living and dying, counts for nothing. Christ said: "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein." Luke xviii: 17. But the critical spirit says: First prove the scriptures. Make sure that they are the Word of God. Exhaust the "higher" and the "lower" criticism. Take nothing for granted. Speculation before faith. If no tares are sown with the wheat by such a process; if no skeptics are made; if no harm is done to religious faith; if no false methods of dealing with the Book of Life on the part of the future preacher are created, it will be little short of a miracle.

Already we have differing schools of criticism in our theological seminaries on points bearing vitally on the structure, interpretation and inspiration of the scriptures; and their theories and speculative methods are paraded *in intenso* before the church in our reviews and newspapers. And what will be the outcome of all this? What the fruits of a theological education saturated with this spirit? What its influence on the pulpit of the future? What on the popular belief and life of the church?

One thing is certain. The present methods of education fail to give us a class of ministers adapted to reach and work successfully among the lower and ignorant classes in our cities and other great centers of population. The church as such has now no hold on them; the gospel is exerting no more direct influence on them than if they lived in the heart of heathenism. The only effective agency at work in their behalf are a few "missions," like the "Howard" and the "McAuley" of New York, and the "Ellery Street," of Brooklyn. Perhaps I ought to include the "mission chapel" system, and some of our "city missions." But the *regular ministry* is not the working power in these sporadic efforts. One of the most extraordinary works of grace of which I have any knowledge, considering its extent and the character of its subjects, has been recently wrought in the "City of Churches;" not by its distinguished pastors, but by the earnest labors of an illiterate man re-

cently converted in a "coal-hole," and set to work in the most degraded district of the city, and sustained by one of its churches.

No sane man will claim that our ministers as now educated are professionally *fitted* to work among this class. They are not educated with reference to such a population. They would fail, in almost every instance, if they should attempt to evangelize it. And yet this class forms the *majority* in all our large cities and new settlements; and it is increasing in a ratio that is alarming. Our teeming millions are rapidly centering in our cities. It is also a fact that the majority of accessions to our regular city churches of late comes through the "Mission Chapel" system, and kindred agencies at work among the poorer and degraded portions of the community. The statistics on this subject are surprising. And equally surprising is the dearth of conversions in our regularly constituted churches under the able ministrations of settled pastors. A highly cultured and learned ministry—the product of our present educational system—notwithstanding the increase of appliances, and social and æsthetic attractions, and costly and splendid edifices, for some reason fails—sadly and alarmingly fails—as it respects the conversion of souls. And this too at a time when marvelous results are reached by evangelistic work, in favoring conditions, even when the instruments which God uses are often uncultured, and low in the social scale.

The lesson taught by these facts is too obvious and important to be ignored. The law of *fitness* in the spiritual as in the natural world, is one which God always honors. We cannot set it at naught and succeed. "The poor ye have with you always," saith the Master. There is a world of practical truth in these words. But are not his ministers being educated for the rich, the learned, the refined and cultured, those high in the social scale—educated mainly with reference to the pulpit, the stately sanctuary, and the surroundings and attractions of an eligible "settlement"? There is such a thing as educating ministers *away from the common people*—educating them with reference to a *class*, and not toward and for our common humanity; educating them into effeminacy, and over-fastidious tastes, and scholarly methods and habits, and into the love of

ease and literary pursuits—with little real earnestness of purpose, and robustness of character—little genuine sympathy with man as man, lost, ruined, and going down to death in an almost unbroken mass. And this is just what we have been doing substantially for a whole generation!

One of the most urgent and momentous problems which now begins to burden God's people is: How to reach with the Gospel of life the great mass of ignorant, degraded and dying humanity, living in the very shadows of our churches, and in a social and spiritual condition bordering on actual barbarism and heathenism? Reason and experience assure us that this immense kingdom of darkness can be won to Christ and socially elevated, only by agencies specially *adapted* to the conditions which rule it. And chief among these agencies is the living ministry of the Word, trained and fitted for this arduous and self-denying labor. We need an army of men for this work, in all our populous cities, and along our vast frontiers, and over all our new States and Territories. And such an order of teachers, preachers, and evangelistic pastors, the church *must* provide in some way, or in time our great and rapidly growing cities will be given over to irreligion and wickedness, and a large part of our national domain will be lost to Christ.

And *whence* are these missionary leaders and workers to come? What is the church doing to raise them up? Of what avail for this great and peculiar work are our existing methods, and schools of training? When our civil war suddenly burst upon the country, it was not "West Point" that saved the Union. No, under God it was mainly our "Militia." And so when God's time comes for a general and earnest move upon the gigantic kingdom of evil in the midst of us, it will not be our theological seminaries that will furnish the grand social and spiritual forces needful to achieve the difficult conquest; but the "Militia" of Christ's followers—an improvised ministry, chosen and practically trained for this very work, and specially endowed by the Holy Ghost, full of faith and prayer and the spirit of self-denial.

Why should we not have schools for this very purpose? We have enough, and to spare, of seminaries devoted to culture and scholarship and literary and æsthetic education. Let

us have now in addition, what the times imperatively demand; what the social and moral condition of untold millions, living and dying in sin and social and moral degradation in the midst of our churches and Christian institutions, plead for: let us have schools, and methods of training, with special reference to evangelistic work among these countless multitudes, shown to be accessible to the Gospel, and yet practically now beyond the circle of the church's influence.

In conclusion, I venture to repeat and emphasize what I have already expressed, that the great practical question of the hour in reference to an educated ministry relates to the WORD OF GOD—its true place and function in the system of training for the sacred calling; how to inspire due reverence for it, and enthusiasm in the study of it; and how to infuse its divine spiritual power into the minds and hearts of those who are to preach it, and thereby arm them with the only invincible and effective weapons of our spiritual warfare. The real, the urgent need of the Church, in this era of the world's history, is not scholarship, but a pentecostal revival of the Spirit of God in the hearts and lives of men. The question that should be uppermost in every Christian heart, and in every Christian sphere, is, How shall we make the Word of Life the wisdom and power of God to the salvation of a world of dying sinners? The work of the critics may have its uses; but the work of preaching "Christ and him crucified," not with words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, is a higher and far more vital work. The right training of our religious teachers in the most effective methods of winning souls to Christ, is immensely more important than the settlement of the authorship of the Pentateuch. The thing that needs to be done, and well and constantly done, is to vitalize and make dominant in our theology, and preaching and literature, and evangelistic work, the great doctrine of a crucified, risen and reigning Saviour—a doctrine as mighty to save lost men in this age of the world as in the apostolic age.

Is not the *Pulpit* itself largely responsible for the present attitude of the Pew, and for the absenteeism from the sanctuary which is so marked a feature of the times? Is it not, in

part at least, caused by the lack of adaptation, earnestness, and spiritual power in our modern preachers? Is it not a natural rebound from the prevalent methods of training and style of preaching? And is not the remedy apparent? The miserable expedients which are now resorted to in order to attract the people, would not be necessary; the formalism and deadness which now so extensively prevail would no longer exist; the self-righteous separatism which now misleads some honest souls seeking the "higher life," would disappear, if the spirit and unction and power of the first preachers of the gospel were once more to animate and dominate the pulpit. And new LIFE, POWER, the pulpit *must* have, and have "more abundantly," or it cannot cope successfully with the infidel and materialistic spirit of the times, or with the tremendous forces of depravity now arrayed against the Lord's anointed. Scripturalness, earnestness, unction, a *Pauline* consecration to Christ and glorying only in the Cross, *must* again characterize it, or we may well despair of the conversion of the world.

And the kind of ministerial training now needed is the kind which promises the best results in this direction. And in proportion as this kind of training is lost sight of or made subordinate; and learning, and oratory, and literary ability, and the manifold appliances of human wisdom and culture are put in its stead, in that proportion will the ministry of the future be a *failure*, at least so far as it respects the Divine purpose in ordaining and conserving it. For a ministry, as we all know, may have any amount of culture, talent, and genius; may attract crowds of eager and applauding listeners; may be praised, and flattered, and "reported" in the newspapers—and still be a ministry without any genuine sympathy with Christ and perishing souls—a ministry barren of spiritual results such as angels rejoice over, and of which the Master will pronounce in the last day the approving words: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Matt. xxv: 21.

Nothing would do so much to correct the pernicious tastes and habits which prevail, both in the pulpit and the pew; to do away with the present rage for novelties, and sen-

sationalism, and to quicken the ministry itself, and broaden and deepen its influence, as a fresh and earnest survey and study of Biblical Truth by all engaged in the sacred calling—a survey of it not so much from the standpoint of historical symbols, or criticism, or ecclesiasticism, as from the inspired, spiritual side—its fundamental doctrines as related to the moral kingdom of God, and especially to the Life, the Crucifixion, and the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, the three great facts which really constitute the history of the universe, and will shape and give character to it, in all the coming ages of time, and even throughout eternity.

Fifty years of careful extended observation, in circumstances favorable to an intelligent judgment in the matter, convince the writer that the present system of rendering public pecuniary aid to indigent students, especially during their academical and collegiate course, needs radical *revision*, both in the interest of the ministry and of the church at large. Either the system should be abolished entirely and the candidate left to his own resources and to private aid, or the present evils, serious and many, connected with its practical working, should be at once reformed.

Is not the fact also to be greatly lamented, that our theological seminaries are falling into the habit of loud public bidding for patronage, both in the matter of pecuniary aid to the student and of superior accommodations? One of them gives $200 a year, and well-furnished rooms, rent free, to her advanced students; and others hold out tempting offers in the way of aid and surroundings. Will it not come to pass that the school which *outbids* its competitors will get the most students, irrespective of its comparative merits, or of the interests of other less liberally endowed schools, or of the general welfare of the church? And will not such a prodigal use of sacred public funds tend to check the spirit of liberality, impair the character of the recipients, and foster ideas and habits injurious to the gospel ministry?

It is clear to my mind that unless some important

change is made in the existing system of training men for the sacred calling, or some other scheme shall be devised, that will raise up an essentially different generation of preachers, and writers, and workers in the domain of Religion; sure as the nineteenth century is working its great and manifold changes and revolutions in men's minds, and habits, and in society at large, so sure will the Pulpit continue to wane, and the Church to lose ground as an aggressive power, until "the glorious gospel of the blessed God"—able now, as ever before, in right hands, to subvert kingdoms, and to lead, and vitalize, and subordinate to his glory, all the forces of the world—will become a "by-word and a reproach among men."

SECTION III.

PAUL THE MODEL PREACHER.

Contrast the gospel as preached in Apostolic times, with the gospel preached in the average pulpit of A. D. 1882. It is substantially the *same* gospel—in form, in substance, in essential facts, and doctrines, and sacraments, and instrumentalities—and yet how *unlike!* How unlike in spirit, in power, in practical results! In a world of change, the Gospel remains unchanged, in itself: it is the *administration* of it only that changes. The Mosaic dispensation, old and powerful as it was in the traditions, and institutions of the Jewish people, was abolished. The old Philosophies—the slow growth of the centuries, and which once ruled the empire of mind, waxed old and lost their power. The false Religions, and gigantic systems of Idolatry, which then existed, have either passed away or been essentially changed, in the march of events. The kingdoms and empires which once ruled the world, have waned and died out. The political and social condition of mankind, has undergone revolution after revolution, in rapid succession. Christianity is the *only living* system of Thought in the world to-day that has its roots in the antiquity of the past. Its foundations were laid in Eden. Through four thou-

sand years of Divine manifestations and discipline, it cast forth its roots, and in "the fullness of time" took its assigned place among "the thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers" of the world, and in a single generation wrought wonders, so many and so stupendous, as to cast all other systems of religious faith into the shade. The record of the *apostolic age* of the Church, is the most wonderful record ever made by any spiritual and moral power in the whole history of the race. And Christianity wrought it all—Christianity, pure and simple—Christianity in the hands of a few men, and men, for the most part, untrained in any of the schools of human learning, and unaided by any extraneous influences whatsoever. It was "the Story of the Cross," as told with wondrous simplicity and enthusiasm, that did it.

And the *master spirit* of that triumphant Power, so far as human agency was represented in it, was Paul, called, by distinction, "the Apostle to the Gentiles." He was among the early converts to it, after the ascension of our Saviour. And the spirit of that Power seemed really incarnated in him. His whole character and ministry, from the first, took on the likeness of the Cross. The Cross was his whole inspiration, and he had it in its fullness. The Cross consecrated every talent, and gift and possession, of the man, the scholar, the preacher, the apostle. The Cross vitalized, guided, subserved, and glorified them all. The Cross filled his whole vision, sublimated it, and made the preaching of it by him the very "wisdom of God and power of God unto salvation."

Who was Paul, and what the manner of his life after his conversion, and what the secret of his almost superhuman power? The space at my command will not allow me to answer these questions save in a word, and as they stand related to my main purpose. But they are questions so pertinent to the ministry, so suggestive of possibilities, and so pregnant with lessons of duty and attainment, that every preacher of the Word should ponder them well.

He was probably about twenty-seven years of age when first introduced to our notice. He was then a fierce persecutor of the faith, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, a Pharisee of the Pharisees, high in honor and influence at Jerusalem; sincere,

but the very incarnation of Jewish bigotry, and hatred toward the crucified Nazarene, and all who adhered to his cause. So much so that he went voluntarily to the chief priests and agreed—unlike Judas—without reward, to destroy the infant Church; and, armed with authority, he was on his way to Damascus to execute the terrible deed, when He whom he persecuted met him in the highway and changed his heart, and changed his whole mind and life. Paul was also well versed in the Jewish Scriptures, and in Rabbinical learning. He was master of the Roman and Grecian literatures. And was gifted with intellectual powers of the very first order.

What a career, in point of worldly ambition and distinction, lay open to that young man at the hour of Stephen's martyrdom! "And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him." Acts 22: 20. And yet, on his way to Damascus on a bloody mission, after he saw the Christ of glory his one ambition was "to know *Him*, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." Phil. 3: 10, 11. So intense was his loyalty to his Divine Master that he exclaims with vehement passion when writing to the Galatian church: "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world." Gal. 6: 14. And also to the Corinthians: "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech, or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God: for I determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified." 2 Cor. 2: 1, 2.

His field was the world. "So much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." Rom. 1: 15, 16. "Not ashamed of the Gospel" at Jerusalem, in the presence of his old associates, and the haughty and self-righteous Pharisees. "Not ashamed of the gospel" standing up among the philosophers

of Athens, and discoursing to them on "Mars Hill." "Not ashamed of the gospel" in Corinth, in Ephesus, or in Philippi, as his masterly epistles to the churches gathered by him in these respective cities abundantly testify. "Not ashamed of the gospel" even at Rome, among imperial courtiers, and senators, and even in "Cæsar's household." "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ." Phil. 3: 7, 8.

We might expect that such a complete crucifixion of the flesh, with all its ambitions, and passions, and selfishness; and such a consecration of the whole man—genius, talents, endowments, life and purpose, to the Master, of whom he inquired in the hour of his conversion: "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" would bring forth *corresponding fruit.* And it *did.* That single apostle planted large and flourishing churches in all the chief cities of Asia, and at Rome - planted them in the very centres of idolatrous worship, and vaunting philosophies, and heathen abominations—planted them in the very shadows of the Parthenon, of the Academy, and the Porch. The simple record of the results of his ministry is so marvelous as to seem well-nigh incredible.

He wrote also no less than *fourteen* of the Epistles of the New Testament: and what grandeur of conception, what grasp of intellect, what breadth and depth and height of thought, what wealth of love, and richness of Christian experience, what splendor of faith, and sublimity of consecration, and what power of suffering, and endurance under it, characterize all these familiar yet profound epistles! The ages past have produced but *one* such man, preacher, writer, disciple. The highest point the mind of the church, even of her ripest scholars, and profoundest thinkers, after eighteen hundred years, has attained to, or even aspired to on this field is, correctly to *understand and expound* his doctrines—so high, so divine, so all-comprehensive are they, in principle, in relation and in application. His life, covering a period of only thirty or thirty-five years, in the service of Christ; in preaching, in writing, in

travels, in bonds, and imprisonment, and sufferings, as an "apostle," "a prisoner of the Lord," an organizer—with "the care of all the churches" upon him, is a grand epic, an inspiration, a glorious vision of sanctified manhood and activity. He was as a *racer*, ever on the "course," his eye steadily fixed on the "goal," never "looking back," counting not that he had "already apprehended," but "reaching forth and pressing toward the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." The power of one such magnificent intellect, and majestic heart, and wonderful life, cannot be measured. It is a priceless heritage to the church of the living God. Such a model deserves to be held up to the admiring gaze, and the earnest study of every preacher of the Cross.

We get a glimpse of Paul in the closing period of his eventful career that is full of pathos, and rich in dying testimony to the preciousness and power of the faith he had so long preached. Although not old in years, he called himself "Paul the aged." He was now a "prisoner" at Rome, "for the testimony of our Lord." What force and tenderness are there in the words he addresses to his "dearly beloved son Timothy:" "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel, according to the power of God; who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: whereunto I am appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed; for I know who I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." 2 Tim. i: 8–12. And what more fitting to close such a career, than the sublime words of the grand old warrior, covered with the scars of battle, and also addressed to Timothy, in the supreme hour of his life: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have

fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me in that day; and not to me only but unto all them also that love his appearing." 2 Tim. 5: 7, 8.

According to universal tradition, he suffered martyrdom at Rome in the year A. D. 68, probably only a few days before the death of Nero, who had cruelly tortured and put to death so many of his brethren, whom he had been instrumental in converting to Christ. Being a "Roman citizen" he could not be crucified, as was his Divine Master, nor be thrown to wild beasts in the amphitheatre, as many of his fellow disciples were. He died either by the lictor's ax, or the military sword, probably the latter, which was more usual under Nero. He was taken from prison, after two years confinement, by a body of soldiers, and led out to execution beyond the city walls, upon the road to Ostia, the port of Rome. As the martyr, and his executioners passed on, their way was crowded by a motley multitude of goers and comers between the metropolis and its harbor. Silently the small troop of soldiers wend their way under the bright sky of an Italian midsummer. There is a tradition that he preached Christ to his guard while on the way to execution, and that some of them were converted to the faith for which he suffered death.

And thus ended the most majestic, and noble, and useful life, except that of Christ himself, ever lived in the flesh. And that life was all the fruit, the product, the outcome of the grace of God, in and through the glorious gospel which Paul lived to preach, and died to honor. Had not Jesus met him on the way to Damascus, and converted him to the faith he was then madly seeking to destroy, and inspired him largely with his own blessed spirit, that he might be a "chosen vessel unto the Gentiles," such a character as that of Paul would not stand out on the page of human history, the wonder, the study, and the admiration of the centuries. And but for that magnificent life, and that glorious martyrdom without the gates of Rome, the church and the world to-day would present a very different moral and religious aspect.

SECTION IV.

THE EARLY TRIUMPHS OF CHRISTIANITY.

THE *Power of the Gospel*, as demonstrated in the first ages of Christianity, claims a passing notice in this connection, and is a subject which every preacher should study and ponder for himself, until he apprehends at least the causes and elements which wrought it.

See how it triumphed in the *abolishment of the Mosaic dispensation*. There was never on the earth a ritual that struck its roots so deep in the soil of individual and national sentiment and life, or whose principles were so vital and dominant in the life and growth of true religion in the world, as was the Jewish. The Jew, the world over, was the very incarnation of it. And yet that venerable and powerful system was done away with, by the coming and death of Christ as a "propitiation for sin," and the inauguration, on the day of Pentecost, of a new and a more spiritual dispensation. The uprooting of that system, and the "breaking down of the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile," was the most difficult, and the severest task ever undertaken by the founder of a new faith, or a new dispensation. But the Gospel, on trial, was found equal to it; and it vanished away like the darkness of night, in spite of Jewish bigotry and intolerance, as the Sun of Righteousness rose upon Calvary.

The power of the Gospel was also shown in the *overthrow of Pagan Idolatry, and other hoary systems of false religions*. The old dispensation abolished, and the great wall which separated the Jew and the Gentile world prostrated, the Gospel passed over, and spread out from the city of Jerusalem, in spite of the crucifixion of its founder, and the mad opposition of its enemies, conquering and subduing everywhere. Its power was shown, not only in going to the barbarian, whose ignorance might be said to be the mother of his devotions, and of whom it might be denied that he had any fixed system to defend, and raising him from his degradation, and converting him from his errors to a new man; but also in producing a like result on those who had been refined by the cultivation of philosophy and the arts. It entered imperial Rome, and polite Athens.

It entered the Forum, and trembled not to cross the threshold of the palace of the Cæsars. It sat down and confronted philosophers under the very shadows of the Parthenon. It fulmined over Greece, and made Corinth, and Ephesus, and Philippi, central points of redeeming influence. Formidable as were the errors and superstitions of these venerable systems, and deeply as they were embedded in the hearts of the people, and in the civilization of the age, the Gospel was adequate to the work of extermination.

The simple doctrine of the cross made Paul an overmatch for the learned sophists of Greece and Rome. He was able to face all the intelligence and even the philosophy of the world and demonstrate to them a higher "wisdom." His masterly sermon to a company of conceited philosophers in the city of Athens, was not only *heroic*, but profoundly *skillful*, as it struck at the very *root* of the false systems he was combating. Note its conclusion: "But now God commandeth all men everywhere to repent; because he hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world by that man whom he hath ordained." Christ and repentance was a new doctrine, and it cleaved straight down through all their sophistries, errors, and superstitions, to the very core of their hearts. And this was the doctrine he everywhere preached; in city and country, to governors and philosophers, to peasants and to Sophists, to prisoners and slaves. And the doctrine was as "life from the dead," to men really dead in trespasses and in sin. It brought to light what their own rotten systems had never discovered. The proclamation of Divine Mercy—of peace and reconciliation with Heaven's offended Majesty, through "the justifying righteousness" of another—a doctrine never hinted at by their oracles, or dreamed of by their philosophers—was as a strain of heavenly music to souls burdened with conscious guilt.

The publication of this doctrine, by men of simple lives, and unselfish aims, and earnest purpose, soon robbed Jupiter, and the whole family of the gods, of their votaries, and turned the Pantheon into a ruin, and vacated heathen temples over the whole Roman Empire. This is veritable *history*. The younger Pliny, in a letter to the emperor Trajan, describes the

rapid progress the Gospel was making. He writes that it had spread, not only through the chief cities, but even villages, and the country: that persons of all ages, and ranks, were seized by it as by a contagion: that the temples were almost deserted, the sacrifices nearly intermitted, and the victims almost without a purchaser. Glorious Gospel! "The power of God and the wisdom of God," in very deed.*

If the faith of the Church needs a grand *quickening*, and her ministry a new baptism of fire, and hope, and purpose, *here* are the elements of it. The Gospel is shorn of none of its power. The Gospel we preach to-day is the self same Gospel which moved and converted the Roman world while yet in the infancy of its power. It is just the same, in every lineament and feature of its Divine character,—in every doctrine, principle, provision, ordinance, and promise,—the same in its Head, in its Holy Spirit, and in the instrumentality for its administration. It *can be made, therefore, to repeat* the triumphs of the first age of its planting. Indeed, the talent, the attainments, the numerical strength, the pecuniary resources, the means and appliances to reach and influence all nations, and peoples, and classes of men, and convert them to the one true Faith, are now altogether *superior* to those possessed by the primitive Church. The political and social, the intellectual, and moral and religious condition of mankind, is also altogether more favorable for the successful prosecution of the work of converting and evangelizing the nations.

What then doth so hinder the progress of Christianity in this eventful day in the world's history? Why drags so heavily the chariot of salvation? Why has the Pulpit, comparatively,

* More than thirty years ago the writer listened to a sermon on this subject by the late Rev. James M. Macdonald, D.D., of Princeton, N. J., then pastor at Jamaica, N. Y.—a reverent and severe student of the Word, an able expounder of it, as his published works will show, and a faithful and eloquent preacher of it, as many will testify. The sermon made a deep impression on his mind, and in all probability he has reproduced above some of its striking thoughts. He was a man who thought for himself. He was not willing to enter into the labor of others. But for his advice, kindly proffered just before his lamented death, it is doubtful whether he would have ventured to publish his views on the pre-existence of the man Christ Jesus.

so little influence in the world's affairs; so little power over its thought, and development, and life; so little success in winning to Christ even those who attend upon its stated ministrations; so little aggressive force in the direction of the immense and growing masses of ignorance, and sin, and infidelity lying wholly outside of the Church; and so little regard for the command of our Lord to his disciples to "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature?" Why is "the glorious gospel of the blessed God" a *dull* theme in God's own sanctuaries, on lips consecrated to preach it, and among assemblies gathered to hear it, and owing life and immortality to it? Why is it a dead letter, "a rock of offense, and a stone of stumbling," to such multitudes of men and women who must be saved by it, or else forever perish in their sins? Why is it made a subject for jest, and ribaldry, and caricature, and blasphemous epithets, to millions who have been trained under its benignant influences, and who live and have their being amidst its altars, and sanctuaries? How is it possible that in this nineteenth century of Christian civilization, in our own land, so favored of God, and crowded with costly temples, pointing heaven-ward, and resounding with sacred praise, all that is true, and pure, and sacred, and inspired and inspiring in the Christian religion, and in the book which reveals it from heaven, is ridiculed, profaned, denounced, and the holy name of Jesus Christ blasphemed, in the presence of immense assemblages, and on the Sabbath, to their great "entertainment," by a blatant Atheist, who makes "merchandise" out of the unbeliefs and souls of men?

Is it not *time* for the Church, which Christ has redeemed out of the world to the glory of his grace; and the ministers of the word, called to the kingdom in a day of supreme interest and responsibility; to take note of these things, and lay them up in their hearts, and muse on them until the sacred fire shall burn with unquenchable ardor and consume away all the dross; "and the sacramental host of God's elect," shall once more gird on the armor of invincible faith, and go forth to the conquest of the world in the spirit of Paul and the primitive church? "The Lamb in the midst of the throne" is ready "to break the seals" of the mysterious book of human

events, and disclose to our vision a chapter of redeeming grace, and spiritual signs and wonders, and victories, that shall eclipse even the chapter of primitive conquest. He is ready, and waiting for His Church "to come up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." He is ready to multiply days of "Pentecost," with the "rushing mighty wind" of the Holy Spirit, until Zion's "watchmen shall see eye to eye" on the up-rearing walls of Christ's Kingdom, and Redemption's song shall echo from hill to hill, and from land to land, and shall roll along every valley, and millennial glory shall brighten every sky, and add new rapture to the angelic choir around the throne.

The church has all the means essential to the speedy conversion of the world. The machinery is complete. We can conceive of nothing wanting in this respect. The Gospel itself is adequate to the work. The Holy Spirit is all-sufficient. The Church is large in number, and abundant in resources. Her ministry, for the most part, is an educated and an intellectual ministry. The promises of God are positive and all that can be desired. Never before in the history of the world, had the friends of Christ so many, and such powerful auxiliary forces at their command; or such facilities to use and make them effective. But *one* thing is wanting, and that is *power*. The immense, and seemingly perfect machinery moves, and to the outward eye, often seems to move smoothly, and even grandly. But where are the spiritual results? Where are the souls converted, the churches built up and made strong spiritually; where the glorious revivals which used to gladden the hearts of those who are praying for the coming of Christ's kingdom? Are not the statistics of the universal church in these particulars, during the last decade or two of years, of a truly alarming character? Is not the hand of "the Lord shortened so that he cannot save?" Is the spiritual harvest at all corresponding to the preparation and the outlay; to the extent and promise of the field sown and cultivated?

I have already said that the Gospel can be made to *repeat* the triumphs of the first age of the Church. Can any one *doubt* it, in view of the success of missionary work in modern times?—at the Sandwich Islands, in Madagascar—in Eastern

Turkey, in India, China, and Japan? What if the faith, the consecration, the overmastering loyalty to Christ of Paul, were to come to characterize the mass of preachers, and the great Brotherhood of disciples? Would there be any doubt *then?* And is *this* an impossibility? Are we not warranted in praying for it, and striving for it? Nay, *must* not the Gospel be made to repeat her early great triumphs, and repeat them on a grander scale, and excel them vastly, as the volume of ungodliness and unconsecrated mind and resources of the world in this nineteenth century excels that of the first century of the Christian era, if the *Millennium* is ever to come?

And is not the Church looking for *it*, expecting *it*, praying for *its* speedy coming? Are we to die without the blessed sight? Are six thousand years of prophecy, and preparation, and promise, to disappoint us? Are our hearts to fail us, after all, in view of the slow progress of the Gospel, the faint signs of Christ's coming; fail us after so long a waiting, in view of the increasing wickedness of the times, the swelling tide of rationalism, infidelity, and even atheism; and the worldliness, and apathy, and deadness of the Church? Shall the views which already prevail to a considerable extent—low and demoralizing views, as I believe them to be—respecting the *literal* coming of Christ, prevail *generally*, viz., that the gospel dispensation is a failure, so far as it relates to the conversion of the world; that its mission will be accomplished when it shall have been preached "as a witness" to all nations, and that it must give place to another, which we are to pray for and expect in the immediate future,—*viz.*, the coming of our Lord in visible person to destroy the wicked, and reign with his saints? The general prevalence of such views, in my judgment, would be one of the greatest *calamities* which could befall the church. If the dispensation of the Holy Spirit, abiding in the Word, and in the hearts of God's people—taking the things of Christ and showing them to sinners, and striving with them and interceding for them "with groanings which cannot be uttered"—if *such* a dispensation *fails* to subdue and win the world to Jesus—what can we expect of a dispensation of visibilities, and outward demonstrations? It is preferring

the "letter" to the "spirit," the form to the substance, the machinery which Ezekiel saw in vision by the river Chebar, to the "moving spirit" which animated all the wheels and made them a thing of life.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ONE MEDIATOR.

The popular impression seems to prevail, as we infer from the preaching we hear from the pulpit, and from the sermonic literature of the day, that the mediation of Christ refers primarily, if not exclusively, to man, and was consequent upon his transgression. Also that it was a *remedial* measure simply, designed to repair the wastes which sin wrought in this earthly system: that the main, if not the only end sought by it, is the redemption and salvation of that portion of Adam's race which comes within the scope of God's electing grace; and when that shall be accomplished the purpose which called it into being will be complete. Consequently, that no other race of intelligent creatures are under mediatorial government. The angels, both fallen and unfallen, are under a different system of laws, which is administered in a different spirit, and by another lawgiver. *They* are not personally interested, therefore, in the redemptive work of Christ; and the system of grace and mercy here unfolded and accomplished will have no radical influence on their character or destiny.

But this conception is founded on a misconception of the true nature, and genius, and scope of Divine Mediation, as presented to us in the Scriptures. If they teach anything on this subject, clearly and emphatically, they teach this doctrine: That mediation is *not* a partial expedient, limited either in time or in the range of its influence: that it is *not* an incidental or superficial measure, a sort of "commercial" transaction between the Father and the Son, by which Christ was to receive a *quid pro quo* for his services: that mediation does *not* grow out of Adam's fall, is not an after thought of the

Divine mind, a supplemental arrangement, suggested by the inroad of moral evil, a secondary or subordinate purpose of the Godhead. But, on the contrary, that the principle of mediation, in its essential nature, is such as necessarily to influence, if not determine, the spirit, principles, and end of the entire dispensation of law in God's moral kingdom. Hence the effects of Mediation cannot be limited, in the nature of things, although its application may be special: the scope of its influence must be co-extensive with the Divine government. The Word of God teaches, beyond denial, that Mediation is a radical, fundamental, constitutional provision: that it originated in the secret counsels of eternity, before any creature existed; that it was made the *foundation* of all God's purposes, decrees, and moral administration, and had priority of all his other acts, and manifestations; that creation, providence, economies, dispensations, and manifestations, were all designed and arranged with special reference to it. The stupendous fact of *Mediation* explains, illustrates, and gives expression and character to the government of God over the entire physical and moral universe.

There was *sin* in *heaven*, before there was sin in *Eden*. The sinning angels were judged and punished before "the voice of the Lord God was heard walking in the garden in the cool of the day," calling Adam to account for his transgression. Had the sin of angels, and the judicial punishment visited upon them for it, no connection of any kind with *mediation?* Was their sin against the "one *God*," or the "one *Mediator?*" Was the overthrow, and expulsion from heaven, of Lucifer and his confederate hosts, simply acts of Omnipotent power and justice, on the part of a stern and uncompromising lawgiver; or were they acts based on the mediatorial principle, and deriving their highest significance from the atonement? And was there no "electing" grace exercised, on the same ground, towards those angels who kept their "first estate," in a day when "thrones, and dominions, principalities, and powers, in heavenly places," fell before the spirit of rebellion? while there was a non-interposition of it on the part of the Divine administrator, such as takes place here on earth, to restrain

angelic depravity, and stay the hand of justice in the day of God's wrath?

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." 1 Tim. 2: 5. "For it pleased the Father, that in Him should all fullness dwell; and having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself, by him I say whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." Col. 1: 19, 20. These scripture declarations, and there are others of similar import, are unequivocal. Their meaning is obvious. Their scope is unlimited. They explain each other, and together they establish and announce the most interesting, and pregnant fact ever declared to man or angel. They declare both the *appointment of a Mediator*, and the *design* of such an appointment. As there is one *God* in the universal system, and only one; so there is one *Mediator*, and only one, through whom, and by whom, God administers the affairs of his kingdom.

The *design* of this mediation is to "reconcile all things unto himself;" to harmonize a universe of discordant, and warring elements, caused by the entrance and dominion of sin; to illustrate, and magnify the Divine attributes, and perfections, before the eyes of all intelligences, and to develop, and establish a system of moral government, called "the kingdom of righteousness and peace." And this benevolent, and all embracing purpose, was to be accomplished by means of an infinite *sacrifice*, "the shedding of blood,"—no less a sacrifice than the death upon the cross of God's own eternal, and "well beloved Son," as an "expiation." "By the light of revealed theology we are taught to view the great atoning Mediator, not only as a 'light to lighten the Gentiles' but as the centre of an immense moral system, composed of all existences, constitutions, and dispensations, shedding his beams to bless dependent worlds, and bathing the whole in the effulgence of his loveliness and glory."* And again:

"The entire arrangement of all the affairs of the universe is to be regarded as one grand mediatorial system, the ground and foundation of which is the atonement of the Son of God. By saying

* Jenkyn on the Atonement, p. 109.

that mediation is essential to the system, I mean that it is on account of the atonement, on the ground of a compensative administration, that God carries on the affairs of his government. The whole of the manifold wisdom of God, exercised on the universe, is regulated entirely according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. . . The system of the universe was not even contemplated irrespective of a mediator. The principles of mediation pervade the whole of it, entering into its creation and sustenance, government and restoration, and into its eternal deliverance and glorification." *

I ask the indulgence of the reader while I give an extract from another author:

"From the moment—if we may be allowed to employ the language of time in speaking of things which acknowledge no date—from the moment the Eternal Father determined to create, and exhibit his glory, and impart his fullness to his intelligent creation, a scheme of mediation became indispensable. The Son of God, as the only adequate representative of his person, and medium of his fullness, became indispensable to that Mediatorial Scheme. And from the moment he began to fulfill its conditions, and realize its designs, he became, by right, and by appointment, the centre of the whole. 'For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the Church; who is the beginning, the first born from the dead: that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell: and having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him I say, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven.' And from that moment he acquired the right and the power to lay all the agencies, and influences of this vast system of existences, economies, and constitutions, as it revolved around him, under tribute, in order to maintain the union, dependency, and order of all its parts to each other, and of the whole to himself." †

There are but two principles, as we can conceive, on which moral government can be administered, viz., the principle of

* Jenkyn on the Atonement, p. 82.
† The Great Commission, pp. 114, 115.

simple, strict, inexorable justice, and the principle of clemency or mercy. The first respects the personal worthiness of the subject, and recognizes no other ground of treatment. The other admits of a substitution, and may respect mainly the merits of another, for whose sake, or on the ground of whose relations to, and services in behalf of, the offender, penalty may be remitted, and favor shown. The government which God has seen fit to establish in his kingdom, is of the *latter* kind. It is not one of unmixed, unbending, inexorable justice. The personal righteousness of the creature is not the sole ground of treatment. It is not administered by a stern, unfeeling, exacting lawgiver and judge. On the contrary, it is a government, in its very constitution, *mediatorial*—having respect to a grand expiatory sacrifice as its foundation—admitting, as its leading feature, the merits of a Divine and accepted substitute—and administered solely by "the one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." The element of mercy and grace, therefore, enters into it, radically, as well as the element of justice, and holiness. It is divinely *benignant*, in its whole aspect towards the creature. We are not under *law* simply, but law tempered with *mercy*. The heavenly throne is a "throne of grace." The lawgiver, and administrator, is Himself the "days-man" betwixt God and his creatures; and his own death on the cross, as the appointed, and accepted substitution, lays an ample foundation for the exercise of clemency, and even forgiveness, to all true penitents, without any infringement of the Divine honor, or in the least impairing the sanctions of law.

This being true, beyond all cavil, it follows that the office of Mediator, the blood of atonement, and the administration of all law, moral and providential, have respect, not only to our little speck of creation, but to all worlds in God's universal empire ; not only to man, here on the footstool, probably the lowest order of rational intelligences, but equally to angels, and all the higher orders, spoken of in Scripture as "thrones, dominions, and principalities, and powers in heavenly places." The "one Mediator" is over *all ;* is at the head of all ; is the administrator of law to all ; is the judge of all ; and will be the final arbitrator of the eternal destinies of all existences.

What infinite interest does this fact gather around "the man Christ Jesus!" What transcendent glory does it put upon his office! What amazing force does it impart to his promises and threatenings! With what a weight of authority does his revealed Word come down to us! What significance does it give to the incarnation, the crucifixion, the resurrection, and the exaltation of Christ to "the midst of the throne!" What a type of horrible malignity does it stamp upon sin — whether it breaks forth in heaven, or rages here in the earth — under the sway of such a benignant government, and such a merciful and gracious administrator! How inconceivably dreadful will be the doom of angels, who turned rebels under such a system, and fought desperately to overthrow it; and the doom of sinful men who do "despite to the spirit of all grace," who "trample under feet" the one gracious Mediator, and even count "the blood of reconciliation" an "unholy thing!"

Two *essential ends* of the Divine mind are answered by the Mediatorial arrangement; and human reason fails to see how they could have been so well accomplished, if accomplished at all, in any other way. The first is to *declare or manifest the invisible God.* "The invisible things of God are seen by the things that are made." He, in the pure essence of Deity, dwells in light that is too dazzling for a creature to behold and live. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."—John 1:18. And so of angels. How *can* any creature, however exalted, comprehend an Infinite Intelligence, or communicate with Him? Upon what possible basis can the finite and the Infinite come together? How can the creature reach up to God in the highest, or stand in the presence of One so holy that even the heaven of heavens is "unclean" in his sight, and who charges "his angels with folly?" How can God look upon any creature with complacency, although the work of his own hands, except as he beholds him in the face of a Mediator? The first great purpose of a Mediator, therefore, was to reveal, "declare," make known, the Divine existence, perfections, and govern-

ment, so that His intelligent creatures might comprehend, love, and adore.

The Mediator is both a *medium* for the display of God's infinite glories, and a *foundation* on which the finite and the Infinite, the creature and the Creator, Infinite holiness and creature imperfection and weakness, may stand together, and commune one with the other; where the "day's-man," Christ Jesus, may put one hand on Infinite Majesty, and Infinite Purity, and the other on a "worm of the dust," a creature of vanity, born in sin, but redeemed, and regenerated by His own eternal sacrifice, and bring about a perfect reconciliation and "everlasting peace." The "one Mediator," chosen of God and invested with all the powers and agencies, and influences essential to the office, is himself intimately and eternally related to the Godhead—nay he is himself God, the equal of the Father, the Logos, "the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person," so that Christ could say with absolute truth, "I and my Father are one." "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, show us the Father?" John 14: 9. But if he were *only* the Divine Son of God, he could not act the part of a Mediator; could not reveal the existence and glories of the Infinite Unseen; could not be, in his person, the true ladder by which God comes down to the creature, and the creature ascends to God; could not act the part of a reconciler, and bring the offended God and offending man together in peace. It was necessary, therefore, to the ends of mediation, that the *creature* also should be represented in the person of the chosen "Mediator." Accordingly, the Eternal Son of God took upon himself a *created* nature—bridged as it were the infinite chasm, and thereby spanned the finite and the Infinite, creature wants and weakness and imperfection, and divine fullness and strength and perfection, and thus qualified himself for the extraordinary office and service he was chosen of God from all eternity to fill and to perform.

It is impossible for us to say, by what means the Eternal Godhead would have made known his existence to his creatures, and displayed his perfections, and challenged their praise and obedience, had there been *no mediator* constituted. But we *do*

know, that whatever light has come forth from the Unapproachable Presence; whatever voice has spoken in Time to the creature out of "the secret counsels of Eternity;" whatever "manifestations of the Excellent Glory," in creation, in providence, and redemption, have dawned on the intelligences of the universe, from "the beginning" until now, *hath shone in the face of Jesus Christ*," the "one mediator;" hath been spoken by lips consecrated by the blood of atonement; have followed in the path of the "Sun of Righteousness" as he rose above the horizon of the eternities, and flooded the moral universe with the beams of everlasting life and blessedness.

Yes: the revelation of God to his creatures *begins*, and *ends* with the "one Mediator." Human reason, and philosophy, have not made a solitary discovery of moral and spiritual truths. God would have remained "the unknown God" of the Athenians, but for this mediator. Not even the doctrine of "the immortality of the soul," is established by the light of nature; and that light itself comes through mediation. The *creation* of the material universe manifests God; but the whole work of creation is expressly assigned to the mediator in the Scriptures. Eternal *Providence* reveals God, in much of his glory, and power, and goodness; but providence is all in His hands, and is made to subserve His will. The revealed *Word* makes God known, with exceeding brightness, and attractiveness; but the mediator is "the Alpha and Omega" of this entire revelation. The work of *Redemption* is a stupendous exhibition of the Godhead; but the mediation of Christ is the central glory and power of the whole system. In a word, we know nothing of the Eternal Father of spirits, except as he is embodied in the "one mediator;" shines through Him, and speaks by Him, and comes down to the creature in Him. In Him dwells all the fullness of the divine nature, and the divine manifestations. In His person the awful glories of Jehovah are softened down and adapted to finite conception. His gracious office is interposed, so that God is no longer "a consuming fire," but a *reconcilable* God, even a forgiving, and loving *Father*.

"The Scriptures teach nothing more explicitly than that the Deity, *except as revealed by Christ*, is at this day and forever will

be, hidden out of sight, and out of thought, to the entire universe of man and angels. . . It is the clear teaching of Scripture, that in point of fact, God, by Jesus Christ, has exerted all the power which he ever has exerted out of himself, and made all the disclosures of himself to creatures which ever have been made. That whatever knowledge men have of God and divine things, they have obtained through Christ, he himself affirms. 'No one hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared him.' It is related in the Old Testament, that God was seen by Adam, Abraham, Moses, and the prophets; but they saw him only in the Person of Christ, who also, by his Spirit, gave to holy men of old the lively oracles of inspired truth. . . . The doctrine that simple Deity was the Creator of the universe, ought never to be published, and if published never received as a doctrine of Christianity: it may be naturalism, but it is not the Gospel. Nay, if it pretend to be Christianity, it is another and a rival Gospel, which no true friend of Christ can do otherwise than disavow and condemn." *

The other high end which the Mediatorial arrangement accomplishes, is to *lay an adequate foundation for the Divine complacency in creature goodness.* We are clearly taught that God cannot be pleased with any creature save as he contemplates him in the face of a Mediator. "His angels he charges with folly." Job 4: 18. "The heavens are unclean in his sight." It is only *in Christ* that the heirs of salvation are chosen. "He hath made us accepted in the beloved." "In whom we have redemption through his blood." "Having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." We cannot stand before him on the ground of personal obedience. No creature, be he saint or angel, is perfect in his sight, *in and of himself.* It is only as he turns towards the "one mediator," and hears the voice of his all-reconciling blood, and covers the creature with the robe of an infinite righteousness, that he is satisfied.

Lord Bacon has a passage on this point of striking beauty and force.

"I believe that God is so holy, pure and jealous, that it is

* Discussions in Theology. By Thomas H. Skinner, D. D., pp. 78, 79, 98.

impossible for him to be pleased in any creature, though the work of his own hands: so that neither angels, man, nor world, would stand, or can stand, one moment in his eye, without beholding the same *in the face of a Mediator*. And therefore that before him, with whom all things are present, *the Lamb of God was slain* before all worlds; but that out of his eternal, and infinite goodness, and love, purposing to become a Creator, and to communicate to his creatures, he ordained in his eternal counsel, that one person of the Godhead should be united to *one* nature, and to one particular of his creatures, so that *in the person of the Mediator*, the true ladder may be fixed, whereby God might descend to his creatures, and his creatures might ascend to God; so that God *by the reconcilement of the Mediator*, turning his countenance towards his creatures (though not in equal light, and degree) made way unto the dispensation of his most holy and sacred will; whereby some of his creatures might stand and keep their state; others might possibly fall and be restored, and others might fall and not be restored to their estate, but yet remain in being, though under wrath, and corruption: *all with respect to the Mediator*, which is the great mystery and *perfect centre of all God's* ways with his creatures, and to which all his other works and wonders do but serve and refer." *

The late Dr. Thomas H. Skinner, of blessed memory, for whose character and services I have profound admiration, in quoting and commenting on the above passage from "the memorable confession of the great Lord Bacon, who has shown himself as sound in the faith as he is in philosophy," says:

"Lord Bacon, on the basis of such scriptures as Job 4: 18: Job 25: 5: Isa. 24: 23, and of his own exquisite sense of what is fit and seemly, held that the reason or ground of necessity for a Mediator was the ineffable purity and majesty of God. The writer once questioned if it be consistent with the infinite goodness of the Deity to suppose that He would not converse with innocent and pure creatures except through a mediator. Reflection has convinced him that Lord Bacon is sustained in his belief by both Scripture and reason. It may be the highest goodness to inspire even unfallen creatures with a sense of infinite majesty and greatness; the want of that sense might be their ruin; and in order to produce it in them, Mediation might have been indispensable. God is too good not to express delight in upright creatures, but it might have been unwise and contrary to goodness to be regardless of the mode in which His delights should be manifested." †

* Bacon's Works, Vol. iv, p. 413. † Discussions in Theology, p. 84.

Before dismissing this subject two other things are worthy of special note, and the consideration of them is essential to an intelligent comprehension of it.

1. *The dignity of the Mediator.* The character and rank of the person selected for such an office, are expressive of the importance, and responsibility of the service, in the estimate of the appointing power. In human affairs, when a service of great difficulty, and extreme importance to the peace of nations at variance is undertaken, the choice is made of men high in the confidence of the people, whose standing, ability, and character, will carry great weight with them. Now *God* has given a most affecting expression of the high value he puts upon the work of Mediation, and of its importance to his universe, by the *choice* he has made of a Mediator. No creature, however exalted in character or rank, was equal to it. He surveyed the "thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, in heavenly places," but none of them all could perform the immense service, or shoulder the tremendous responsibility. Throughout the vast expanse of being the Father knew there was but *one* person fitted for, and capable of, executing his will in reference to this mighty and difficult undertaking.

And upon *Him* it was laid—upon the Eternal Son of God, by the Father's own appointment—knowing too all the *sacrifice* it would cost, both the loving Father who gave, and the obedient Son who endured. It was impossible that there could be *more* than "one mediator," because but *one* such offering could be found: He was God's "own" and "only" Son; and he could not supply another. It was out of his own infinite fullness that Christ came forth to attempt the service; and not even the Godhead could provide a personage of greater dignity and worth. If He could not mediate between "God and man," and accomplish the work of reconciliation, in heaven, and in earth, then reconciliation was *impossible*.

God *could* put no higher value upon the work of mediation than he *has* put upon it, in passing by angels, and archangels, and all the hierarchies of heaven, and calling to the office his "only begotten Son," his own equal in dignity, and power, and glory. He *could* give no stronger expression of

the infinite worth, and importance of the end sought to be accomplished by it, than he *has* given, in taking one from His own bosom and throne to perform the required service. How then must He view the slight put upon such a measure by the children of men, when they refuse to honor the "one Mediator!" How keenly must He feel the insult, and the wrong, done to him and his government, when the Divine "days-man" is rejected, and the overtures of reconciliation made through him to his guilty creatures are spurned! What holy indignation must spring up in His heart, when the reconciling blood, the intercession and pleadings of One so exalted, and set forth by the Eternal Father in a light so sacred, and so full of mercy and goodness, are counted as nothing worth, and trampled in the dust! Is it any marvel that God is a "consuming fire" to all who refuse the shelter, the mercy, the proffered grace, of *such* a Mediator!

Not only the dignity of the Mediator, but *the nature and extent of the sacrifice involved in the measure*, deserves consideration. The Father understood perfectly, from the first, in all its extent and intensity, the humiliation, and personal suffering, even unto a shameful and ignominious death upon the cross, it would cost His beloved Son to execute the high commission given him. And yet, knowing it all, and appreciating it all, as none but He could do, He laid upon him the service. He knew that he must leave the bosom of the Father, and take to himself a humble creature nature; exchange the throne of heaven for a crown of thorns, and the cross of Calvary, and become a "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," and have "not where to lay his head," and be "mocked and spit upon," and "sweat great drops of blood" in agony, under the burden of man's guilt. And still, knowing it all, He called Him to the work. He knew "that without the shedding of blood there could be no remission of sin," and yet He spared not himself, but bound and laid the victim upon the altar of atonement—and that victim was none other than His "own beloved Son," with whom "He was ever well pleased!"

Could the mind of man have ever *conceived* such a sacrifice *possible*, much less have suggested it! The Eternal God, in the secret counsels of eternity, before any creatures were

called into existence, moved solely by the promptings of His own benevolent nature, in contemplating a future universe of moral intelligences, and the best possible system of government, in order to secure His own glory, and their highest good, devising such a scheme of Mediation, and at such an infinite cost—not of power, or treasure, but of personal fatherly feeling! What fullness of meaning, what divine emphasis, does this view of the subject give to those wonderful words: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." John 3: 16, 17. Having now freely bestowed the highest gift in His power, will He withhold any lesser good? Having voluntarily made the greatest sacrifice possible—a sacrifice in comparison with which the blotting out of existence of myriads of worlds and systems, would be as nothing in value—will He now deny to his children, who love and serve him, *any* blessing, in earth or heaven, in time or eternity, which they may desire, and pray for? And is there any measure of wrath, revealed from Heaven against the finally impenitent, under such a system of Mediation, devised at such an infinite sacrifice, and administered by one so loving, and glorious, and for such gracious purposes,—is there any measure of wrath not warranted by the provocation, not demanded by the essential ends of moral government, not necessary to the establishment of a kingdom of "everlasting righteousness and peace?"

In the light of such a Mediation, how sacred, and how awful, seem creature existence, this probationary life, the immortality of the soul, and the endless awards of eternity! How pitiful, how unworthy, how transient, seem the aims, the interests, the ambitions, which fill the minds, and occupy the years, and absorb the energies, of most men! "There is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." And to live without supreme regard to that blessed fact, and pass into eternity with no part in His mediatorial inheritance, is to wantonly sacrifice the highest good, and the most splendid opportunity ever proffered to a creature of God.

CHAPTER V.

THE MEDIATORIAL PERSON.

We have seen that the system of the universe, as fixed in the counsels of eternity, contemplated the intrusion of sin, and the adoption of an extraordinary measure to restrain and limit its dominion, and in the end to overrule it to advance the glory of the Lawgiver, and to illustrate and establish the principles of his moral government over all his creatures. That this was to be accomplished by, and through a "Mediator," chosen of God, and exalted to supreme dominion, into whose hands all power in heaven and in earth, was to be committed, and the whole system of material, and moral existence, and providential control, was to be made subordinate. That this Mediator should represent in one Person, both the Godhead and the creature, and thereby lay a foundation for communication and intercourse the one with the other. And that the basis of the whole arrangement, the warrant for it, the grand efficacious influence to emanate from it, was to be an illustrious *sacrifice*, an all-atoning sacrifice, in the fullness of the dispensation, that should, in the sweep of its majestic power, bring together in "one," the offended Majesty of Heaven, and his erring creatures, and reconcile "all things in earth, and in heaven," and restore peace and joy to a disturbed and warring universe. "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness; that he might be just, and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus." Rom. 3: 25, 26. "For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." 1 Tim. 2: 5. "For it pleased the Father, that in him should all fullness dwell; and having made peace through the

blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself, by him I say whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." Col. 1: 19, 20.

A clear conception of the PERSON of the one Mediator thus honored of the Father, and entrusted with interests and responsibilities, so vast, and sublime, and essential, both in relation to the supreme Head, and Lawgiver, and to the whole universe of intelligences, is of very great importance. And yet, just here, on this vital, and all-interesting point, there is no little confusion, vagueness, and uncertainty in the minds of most believers, and even in the utterances of the Christian pulpit, and press. It is generally conceded that this Person is a *compound* existence, possessed of two distinct natures, utterly unlike in origin, and in essence—a Divine, and a Human —yet without mixture or confusion—the two natures so really, and intimately united as to constitute but one Person. Neither nature *alone*, as a distinct entity, is, or can for a moment be considered, as the one Mediatorial Person.

The essential constituents of that Person is the existence and union of the two natures in their entirety; and it cannot be said to be or to exist in any other condition or to perform any of the functions belonging to it. This Person consequently, is peculiar, unique, essentially unlike any other existence, either in the Godhead, or in the realm of the created universe. He is GOD, the second person in the Holy Trinity, as verily God as the Father is ("I and my Father," says Christ, "are one; he that hath seen me hath seen the Father") and as such he possesses in himself all the attributes of Deity. And at the same time, it is equally true, that he is MAN, a creature, and a creature belonging to an inferior order of intelligences, to a sinful, and condemned race. He represents, in his one Person, *both* the Divine and the Human; both God and man; both the Creator and the creature; both the Lawgiver and the subject, the Judge and the Saviour: and he represents them truly, and essentially, and not in a superficial, or nominal sense. He lives, speaks, and acts, for *both*, in the truest, and highest sense. He guards the honor of Infinite Majesty, and the sanctity of Law, with supreme jealousy, while at the same time he pities, and

loves, and embraces the fallen creatures whom he died to save. He is at the Head of all the "thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers" in heaven, and yet he descends to earth, and becomes "the meek and lowly" one, the despised "Nazarene," a "man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." He weeps over human guilt, and misery, and at last dies on the cross, in shame and agony He created all things, governs and upholds all things, has "legions of angels" at his command, and wields the sceptre of universal dominion: and yet he so humbled himself that he had "not where to lay his head;" all men forsook him in the hour of need; his life was one of extreme solitariness; he was "despised and rejected." He is in his own right and person, "Glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, a God doing wonders," and yet see how he "endured the buffetings of Satan," and "the contradiction of sinners!" "He was tempted in all points like as we are;" scourged, crowned with thorns, crucified between two thieves, amid the scoffs, and revilings of a multitude, who had shouted, "Crucify him, crurify him! his blood be upon us and upon our children." On his kingly vesture is written that wondrous title: "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS!" Yet read the inscription which Pilate placed over his cross, "in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew," in mockery, "this accusation: This is the King of the Jews." When it was "finished"—the long fearful chapter of humiliation, and suffering—the meek, and patient One, with a prayer on his lips for his murderers, because "they knew not what they did," "bowed his head and gave up the ghost," and lo! in that very hour and act of extremest human weakness, and shame, and apparent triumph of evil, he "vanquished the powers of darkness;" and three days after, broke the bars of Death itself, and came forth from the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, a Conqueror, unparalleled and all glorious. And soon after showing himself to his disciples, and confirming their faith, and commanding them to "go and teach all nations, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," "he led them out as far as to Bethany; and he lifted up his hands and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them and carried up into heaven." Luke 24: 50, 51.

And there He sat down again "in the midst of the Throne" of the heavenly glory, and took again in His hand, now pierced with the nails which had affixed him "to the accursed tree," that awful sceptre, now sprinkled, and consecrated by His own blood just shed on Calvary to ransom, and reconcile God's lost creatures—more regal, more sublimely glorious in His goodness, more honored of the loving Father, and adored by all the hosts of admiring, and welcoming angels, than before his humiliation, in the scenes and life of the incarnation. The transcendent glories of that Mediatorial Person, in his exaltation at the right hand of the Father, we are not permitted now to behold, nor "can it enter into the heart of man to conceive." But some intimation of it is given to the church militant, in the closing book of divine revelation, and that intimation is wonderfully significant and suggestive. The beloved John—the last of the apostles to leave the world, and tradition says, the only one of them all who escaped martyrdom,—had a wonderful vision on the island of Patmos, whither he was banished, "for the Word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ." He was "in the Spirit on the Lord's day," and "a great voice as of a trumpet," cried to him, "saying, I am Alpha and Omega. . . . What thou seest write in a book and send unto the seven churches of Asia. . . . After this I looked and behold a door was opened in heaven . . . and a throne was set in heaven," and he who sat on the throne, held "a book written within, and on the back side, sealed with seven seals." And John "wept much because no man was found able to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon." But one of the elders assured him that "the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, had prevailed to open the book and to loose the seven seals thereof. And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne . . . stood a Lamb as it had been slain. . . And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood . . . and hast made us unto God kings and priests. And

I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne . . . and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down, and worshiped him that liveth for ever and ever." Rev. 1: iv, v.

Now observe the main features of this amazing vision: a Lamb—a Lamb as it had been slain—a Lamb in the midst of the Throne—a book which no one could unseal or reveal but the Lamb—the wonderful disclosures made out of the book by him who prevailed to open it, and to interpret it. And the vision closes with the glorified Lamb receiving the homage of all holy intelligences, who unite in a song that exalts Redemption and its Divine suffering Author, as the one grand theme of the eternities. That "Lamb" which the seer of Patmos saw in vision, is the emblem of meekness, and gentleness, and helplessness: a Lamb as it had been *slain*, denotes its typical character, the shedding of the victim's blood on the cross as an expiation for sin—the blood of the one great atonement, so long shadowed forth on Jewish altars. But this bleeding Lamb, this victim of Divine Justice, this "sin offering," this symbol of meekness and innocence, is seen seated in "the midst of the *Throne*," in the very seat and centre of all power, and all responsibility. And to Him is given the Book, in which are hidden all the divine purposes, and the histories of all future events, in time and in eternity; for He alone is found able to break its "seven seals," and read, and interpret what is written therein.

Thus far the Divine record, on its surface, is sufficiently clear to afford definite and consistent views in relation to the Person of the one Mediator. But on one point there is

great vagueness and confusion of ideas in the minds of most men—if they *have* any ideas at all on the subject—I mean in reference to the Person of the Mediator anterior to his incarnation. Did that Person *actually exist in the essential, constituent parts?* Were the two natures, which enter into the one Person, and constitute it, really united, as it is admitted they were *after* his birth into our world, so that the proper, and distinctive, and assigned work of mediation could be carried on, the office filled, the functions all performed? If these, and similar questions, cannot be answered in the *affirmative*, what inextricable confusion and gross inconsistency must inevitably follow!

For the work of *creation* is expressly ascribed to the Mediator, in passages without number. "For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." Col. 1: 16, 17. Here the creation of *angels*, as well as of mankind, is directly ascribed to Him; and all things were made to "consist" in Him, that is they exist in him as the branches exist in the vine, are upheld by Him, have their end, their fullness, their use and accomplishment in Him. So the administration of Mediatorial *authority* and power from the beginning—before the foundations of the world were laid, or angels were exalted to thrones and dominions in heavenly places was certainly in His hands. The rebellion in heaven was waged against the "one Mediator," and was put down and punished by Christ's Kingly power. And the confirmation of those who remained steadfast in their allegiance, was the official act of the great Days-man. He was the Judge who exercised the awful prerogatives of Eternal Justice in that supreme hour in heaven's history—the same Judge who will sit on the Throne in the day of final judgment, and on the same ground, and by virtue of the same authority vested in him from the beginning, will pronounce the sentence of life, and of death eternal, and separate forever the righteous from the wicked. The wonderful ways of *Providence* also on this earthly theatre, during four thousand years of eventful his-

tory, were all ordered, and shaped, and controlled, and subserved, by the hand that hurled Satan from his seat, and exalted the angels that kept their first estate, and that ever since has been rolling on towards completion the eternal purposes of the Godhead.

But *how could this be* if, as yet, the *Person* of the Mediator was not actually and visibly constituted? The Son of God could not act the part assigned Him in the *Mediatorial* economy—could not fill and execute the office of sole Mediator in his simple *Divine* nature, any more than the Father could do it. It was not simply as *God* that he created, governed, judged, punished, rewarded, and administered the providential affairs of this world. There could be no proper Mediatorial Person, or office, or exercise of functions, *until the human nature* of Christ existed, and by voluntary assumption on his part, became a component part of his own existence—the two natures coming together in one Person, just as soul and body constitute a man—the Divine Spirit incarnated in a visible human body, animated also by a human soul. Either we must believe that no Mediator, in the true and full sense of the term, existed in heaven *prior* to the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem of Judea; or we must content ourselves with the self-contradictory ideas that a Person was begotten, and exercised the highest office in God's universe, and created, and upheld, and governed his moral Kingdom, thousands of years before his birth! The point cannot be evaded by saying that all this was *anticipatory;* that Christ's human nature existed in the Divine *purpose*, and therefore is spoken of as if it really were. Such a course of argument would destroy all realities, all verities, and reduce God himself, and the Word, and all existences, to myths, chimeras. Creation, Providence and Redemption; rebellion, sin, guilt, punishment, and reward for obedience; heaven and hell, were all *facts*—tremendous *realities*—known and read of the universe, and interwoven in the history of heaven, and of earth, and hell, thousands of years *before* Jesus lay an infant in the manger at Bethlehem, and wise men came from the east to pay their homage to him. For one I cannot accept such a view. It is absurd in the last degree. Why such a dogma should have obtained credence in the mind of

Christendom, and have held sway there through all the ages, is incomprehensible to me. Where is it taught in the Scriptures, either of the Old or the New Testament? What foundation has it in reason? By what logic, in fact or philosophy, do we reach such a conclusion?

A word in this connection concerning the Mediatorial *Kingdom*. The character of the Mediator, the end of such an arrangement, and the power given into his hands, will determine mainly the character and the results of his Kingly administration. We have already noticed the fact, that the "one Mediator," chosen of God, is the nearest person to himself in the Godhead, his own equal in dignity and power, "the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person"—terms in the highest degree expressive. We have shown that the Father hath put all things into his hands, as "Mediator"—all worlds, all economies, all dispensations, all creatures, and made him absolutely Lawgiver, King, and Judge—to the end that he might accomplish the mighty work given him to do. We have further seen that, foreseeing the entrance of sin into his universe, God the Father entered into covenant with his Son, whereby his death on the cross, as a propitiation for sin, was to be accepted, in lieu of the death of the transgressor, wherever penitence was exercised, and was to be the assured means of reconciling all the moral elements and evolving "a Kingdom of everlasting righteousness and peace." To this end all creatures were made subject to Him, all systems made to revolve about Him, and the Eternal Spirit was sent down into the world to carry on the work by his mighty agency. The *en ire* economy of this Kingdom, therefore, is strictly MEDIATORIAL. It wears no other aspect. It speaks no other voice. In the very centre of this Kingdom is the Throne of Mediation, and the Lamb is in the midst of it—the Lamb of sacrifice, slain from before the foundation of the world. The King here is also a subject: the Creator a creature: the Lawgiver the dispenser of mercy: the awful Judge a Lamb as well, and a Saviour. Here are swayed the highest influences that can act on moral intelligences; and swayed in the fullness and effulgence of their power; and swayed to make alive from the

death of sin, to restore the wanderer to God, to reconcile all things in earth, and all things in heaven; and in order to complete a system of moral government in which God himself shall find great delight, and which shall bring perpetual peace and blessedness to all the myriads of worlds that shall be reached by it. That this "Everlasting Kingdom," this blessed and glorious system of Redemptive agencies and influences, in all its fundamental laws, and provisions, and administrations, *existed before the foundation of the world* was laid, before the angelic rebellion in heaven, even from the beginning of all things—I think cannot be reasonably denied. The Scriptures warrant the belief, nay assert it.

But how could such a Kingdom exist, and answer the end of its establishment; how could its laws be enacted and enforced; how could its agencies and influences be shaped and made effective; how could the thrones, dominions and principalities in heavenly places be made to subserve the glory of Christ's mediatorship; and how could the affairs of the Church of God on earth for four thousand years be so administered as to contribute to "the praise of His grace," *unless* the Person of the Mediator was complete in every element and member?

CHAPTER VI.

THE RELATIONS OF ANGELS TO THE MEDIATORIAL KINGDOM.

By the term "Angels," is meant no particular order of celestial beings, but the entire unfallen portion of God's rational creatures. The Scriptures recognize distinctions among them: it specifies at least four distinct orders or degrees, indicative of rank and power, viz., "thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, in heavenly places." They speak also of angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim; and imply that angels are multitudinous in number. The names given them properly denote *rule* and *authority*, and not simply the honors conferred upon them on the ground of their exalted natures, and high attainments. They are the "ministers" of God's will, and execute his high commissions in every part of his dominion. They are "princes" under the one Mediator, set over various interests, or worlds, to represent the kingly Head, and sustain the established order of things. In Psalm 97: 7, the princes of Israel are called "gods:" "Worship him all ye gods," (Elohim). And the apostle renders it, "Let all the angels of God worship him." They are called likewise "the sons of God:" "When the morning-stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." Job 38: 7. They are compared to "stars," both here, and in the song of Deborah: "The stars in their courses fought against Sisera." But while such distinctive and significant names or titles are applied to them, there is not a word to intimate their respective dominion, or the spheres of their exalted ministries, "that we might not be tempted to idolatry," as Pres. Edwards suggests.

Whether these multitudinous hosts of angels—these various heads of distinct orders, these royal princes, sons of God, and stars, with all their immense retinues of subjects or sub-

ordinates,—all dwell in the literal "heaven," or "heaven of heavens," as we commonly understand the term as used in Scripture indicating the seat of Christ's throne, and the abode of saints who have finished their earthly course, we know not. We naturally conclude, however, that they do *not*. Their apparent number would seem to forbid it. So many high dignitaries, and official characters, and governments and ministries, with their several spheres, and dominions, would, it would seem, also cause "confusion worse confounded," while "order is heaven's first law." It seems far more probable that they people a great number of worlds and systems of worlds in God's wide empire. Astronomy affords strong presumptive evidence that myriads of other planets, besides our little world, are inhabited. While reason dictates the conclusion, that it would be absurd to suppose that the Creator has filled infinite space with an infinite number of suns, and planetary systems, and is all the while evolving new ones out of the mass of nebulæ which is known to exist, only for the sake of displaying his creative power, and with no respect to peopling them with intelligences, capable of discerning his glory, and enjoying the works of his hand, and contributing to his revenue of praise.

It is a reasonable inference, from Scripture representations and allusions, that only a comparatively small part of the angelic creation joined in the rebellion against supreme authority, and were expelled from heaven, and from all future fellowship with their former associates, who "kept their first estate." There came a time—we know not when, but before the creation of man—when it entered into the heart of "Lucifer," the highest and brightest of the sons of God, to attempt the overthrow of the Mediatorial Person and Power; and he induced to join him in the ambitious and wicked attempt, a large number from the angelic ranks, showing his high position and immense influence. What was the *occasion* of this sudden, and wide and fierce revolt, we know not; we are left to conjecture. As there was no *tempter* to seduce "Lucifer, son of the morning," as he afterward seduced our first parents, the occasion must have been something extraordinary. Pres. Edwards supposes it was the exaltation of Christ to the Media-

torial throne. On the supposition that the eternal Son of God took to himself that nature in which he was to suffer, and afterward to reign in glory—a nature inferior to that of even the lowest angelic orders, and that the command went forth from the Father, "Let all the angels worship *him*"—the suggestion is rational, otherwise not. But it is certain that there and then was introduced the principle of moral evil into God's kingdom, which was destined to run its dreadful course through countless cycles in eternity, and through all time's duration, and among the entire human race; and we know not how much farther, nor where nor when its ravages shall cease. Then began the war of antagonistic moral ideas, and principles, and influences, and interests—short and sharp in heaven, —which in the fullness of time was transferred to earth, as its chief theatre, into which "that old serpent called the Devil, and Satan, and his angels were cast" (see Rev. xii), to wax hotter and fiercer down the track of ages, as the time of their final punishment and the consummation of Christ's Redemptive work draweth nigh. Christ, and Satan, the opposing heads of the systems of moral virtue and moral evil, holy and evil angels, redeemed and sinning men, all meet in mortal combat in this spiritual warfare for the ascendency; and maintain it through numberless centuries of strife, and struggle, and carnage. In the expulsion of evil angels from the heavenly abode, and their separation from the obedient sons of God, was foreshadowed that broad and eternal line of moral distinction and separation which the Gospel everywhere recognizes and emphasizes, and which the kingdom of Christ is to evolve, and run through the moral universe, separating, in all worlds, and among all moral intelligences, the evil from the good, the saved from the lost, holiness from sin, and thereby establishing an "everlasting kingdom of righteousness and peace," which shall gather together in one the whole family or commonwealth of the sons of God.

The relations of angels, both fallen and unfallen, to the Mediatorial system, are as real, and as radical, as are the relations of mankind. The habit is quite too common to take a narrow and superficial view of this matter: to confine the scope of the Mediatorial Kingdom, in its grand purpose, and

moral and spiritual results, within altogether too restricted a sphere: to overlook the fact, that the existence, and destiny of angels, are inseparably connected with the Cross: that the interest they take in the progress and triumphs of the Gospel in the earth, rests on broader ground than their own benevolent natures, and involves, on their part, duty, obligation, allegiance to Christ, a higher plane of existence, and an enhanced eternal glory and blessedness. There are facts on this subject, not sufficiently considered, and that are of great interest for the Church to know, and which serve to shed no little light on the ministry of angels, for "are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" Heb. 1: 14. These facts, which I proceed briefly to state, are clearly revealed in the Scriptures, or at least implied.

1. *Angels are under Mediatorial government.* It has been shown already, that the Throne of Heaven is strictly mediatorial, in form and essence, in purpose and effect, in spirit and in principle, in scope and sway. "The Lamb is in the midst of the Throne;" and He is the light and life, the centre and attraction, the supreme authority and head, the "Alpha and Omega," of the whole heavenly system of being and administration. The personal allegiance of every angel in heaven, therefore, from Gabriel down, is due to *Jesus Christ*, as much so as is the allegiance of every saint on earth, or in heaven. His sceptre is over them all absolutely; not as God, but as "the God-man," the "one Mediator;" the same as it is, and on the same ground, and for the same end, over redeemed men.

2. *The angels are Mediatorial subjects.* They were created by Jesus Christ, and for his use and glory, the same as mankind. They "consist" in him, and for him, and are members of his one great family, the same as believers are under the Gospel. They sustain like relations to law, and government, and the other creatures of God. They owe him homage, obedience, and service. Sin in them would be sin against the Mediatorial Person and Kingdom, as really as sin is in us. It is the light of Mediatorial revelation and glory which illumines

their minds. It is the sacrifice of Calvary, to make forgiveness possible, and the recovery of lost virtue, and lost crowns possible, that gives them their most vivid conceptions of the enormity of sin—deeper impressions than the fall and overthrow of their compeers produced, and also conceptions of the infinite worth of that inheritance which has been confirmed to them. It is Mediatorial favor and grace, which kept them from falling in the day of fiery trial, and which steadily and constantly sustains them, and gives lustre to their crowns, and joy to their lives, as eternity rolls on its mighty tide of events. It is the sacred and glorious ends of Mediatorial sovereignty, and purpose, and suffering, and achievement, which they ever keep in view; and with us, and all loyal beings in every world, are bound to strive, with high resolve, to bring about.

The Person of Christ may be despised on earth, and his authority and will set at naught. But never in heaven, save on one memorable occasion; and the swift overthrow, and fearful punishment which immediately overtook every offender, seemed to have effectually warned angels against the repetition of the daring sin. *There* the Person of Christ is divinely sacred, and glorious, in every eye. *There* the service of Christ is an honor, and a pleasure, unspeakably precious, and glorious. *There* the ministries exercised in the Kingdom of the reigning Jesus, be they ever so humble, or exalted, ever so near to the Throne, or far distant in the realm of space, are executed with promptness, and alacrity, and a hearty interest. *There* the service of the temple, the song of praise, the act of adoration, and the fellowship of the blessed, are all alive, and joyous, and acceptable to "the Lamb, for ever and ever." *Man*, in "the pride of his heart," "puffed up with vain glory," often thinks it beneath him to do homage to "the meek and lowly One;" is ashamed to confess his name before the world; is not willing to consecrate to Him his affections, and talents, and property, and gifts, and spend life in toil, and effort, and suffering it may be, to advance his Kingdom. But the loftiest angel or archangel that ministers to the "King of kings and Lord of lords," vails his face in that august Presence, and casts his crown at his feet, and counts it all joy to do His every bidding; and knows no ambition, no interest, no pleas-

ure, other than that of doing the will of Him who sitteth upon the Throne of heavenly grace and glory.

3. *Angels form a part of the Mediatorial System.* That system takes in all worlds, all creatures, all dispensations, all time, and all eternity future. In the *physical* universe the principle of *isolation* is unknown. Every atom of matter in the universe is related to every other atom, and to the whole, by an inherent, inexorable law. So in the *moral* universe. The principle of isolation finds no more place here than in the material universe. Moral beings, creation over, are *social* agents, are united in a *society* or commonwealth; and hence cannot live unto themselves. Every moral being, in all God's moral kingdom, is related to every other moral being, and to the whole kingdom, and to God himself, by a fundamental law; and that law cannot be set aside; nor can angel, or man, or devil, disregard it, and be guiltless. It binds every moral agent to live for a benevolent end,—the good of the whole family, in earth, and in heaven,—and not for selfish ends. It lays upon one and all, everywhere, and at all times, and under all circumstances, the weight of a solemn and fearful obligation to live a life of virtue, and obedience, and consecration to the high purposes of the Gospel, under penalty proportionate to the motives and interests, resisted and sacrificed.

Not only are angels under Mediatorial *sway*, and are *subjects* of Christ's moral kingdom, but they were embraced in the scope of the Mediatorial *design*. They live and have their being, and are working out their eternal destinies, not under a system of unmixed, rigid law; for there is no such system anywhere in the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. The atonement made by Him, is the basis of his Mediatorship, and of all that it involves. The appointment of a Mediator to execute the eternal purposes of the Godhead, was a provision of *grace*, not of law; and that provision embraced in its scope, angels as truly as men. The revelations of the Divine mind and will, and the dispensations of mercy and grace, in and through a Mediator, concern angels as well as saints. They have their place, their ministries, assigned to them in the economy of Redemption. They are, individually, and collectively, interested in the triumphs, and rewards of Christ's Kingdom. The

failure of the Eden dispensation was, beyond all doubt, a terrible disappointment, and grief to them. They saw with dismay the Head of a new race of beings fall before the arts of the grand deceiver, and Satan, cast out of heaven, now enthroned in this new world, over whose creation and beauty, they had just sung for joy. The failure of the dispensation of Calvary—if such a thing were possible—would whelm them, as well as we of the human race, in absolute ruin. *They* are among the "things in heaven" *reconciled by the death on the cross;* they are the chosen associates of the saints in the heavenly glory; and are to take a prominent part in the song everlasting with which the redeemed shall celebrate the Church's triumph.

4. *Angels are great debtors to the Sovereign grace of Christ.*

"When Lucifer rebelled and set up himself as a head in opposition to God and Christ, and drew away a great number of the angels after him, Christ the Son of God manifested himself as an opposite head, and appeared graciously to dissuade and restrain by his grace the elect angels from hearkening to Lucifer's temptations, so that they were upheld and preserved from eternal destruction at this time of great danger by the free and sovereign distinguishing grace of Christ. Herein Christ was the *Saviour of the elect angels*, for, though he did not save them as he did elect men from the ruin they had already deserved, and were condemned to, and the miserable state they were already in, yet he saved them from eternal destruction they were in great danger of, and otherwise would have fallen into with the other angels. . . . Thus the angels did depend on Christ, and they were supported by grace and strength from him freely communicated: it was sovereign grace that he was not obliged to afford them, for he was not obliged to afford them any more grace than he did the angels that fell, so that it can truly be said of the angels, that they have eternal life by sovereign grace through Christ in a way of self-emptiness, self-diffidence, and humble dependence on him. So far is the way of the elect angels receiving eternal life like that of elect men's receiving it." *

Angels do not stand in need of *pardon*, as do the sinners of our world; for they have never forfeited their lives to Divine Justice. They have never sinned, and will never sin, for they are confirmed in holiness.† A part of the song of the

*Edwards' Works, Vol. VIII., pp. 491, 492.

† I cannot agree with Dr. Bushnell that there is not a "vestige of

redeemed and glorified saints, therefore, *they* can never sing: "Unto Him that loved us *and washed us from our sins* in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever." Rev. 1: 5. And yet are they infinite debtors to the love, and grace of the great, and only God-man. They owe their very existence to Him. It was Christ's "electing" grace which upheld them during the war in heaven, when so many fell under the mighty influence of the chief of all the angels. It was Christ's act which confirmed them in holiness in reward of their fidelity. It is Christ's sacrifice on the cross that laid the very foundations of the whole Mediatorial system, whose revelations enlighten them, whose government blesses them, whose sacred and benign influences, tempering mercy and grace with law and justice, mould and develop their character and lives. But for Christ's interposition and death, there would have been no Mediation; no throne of grace; no intercessor; no God-man to come between Infinite Majesty and Holiness, and the puny, and imperfect creature. Their own natures and crowns will take on new lustre from their long and intimate association with Christ, and his redeemed saints. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for the heirs of salvation?" Is not this their special and honored ministry? And learn they nothing from it, new and glorious, even to their exalted minds? Experience they no deeper tone, no higher joy, no broader views respecting God's perfections and government, no profounder gratitude in view of sin's terrible power and ravages, and the doom of fallen angels, and impenitent men, and their own personal safety, as they are brought home to them in the exercise of their appointed ministry?

They ministered to *Christ* himself, while in the flesh. They saw and marked his life, throughout his entire career. They were with him in the desert of Judea, when, after forty days' fast, he had the grand encounter with the great adversary of God and man. They were with him in Gethsemane, when his

authority in Scripture for the opinion that the good angels are beings that have *never sinned*." He reasons in favor of the idea "that they are all *redeemed* spirits." But his argument is weak and unsatisfactory. —Nature and the Supernatural, p. 131.

"soul was exceedingly sorrowful even unto death." They were with him on Calvary, through all the scenes of the crucifixion. They entered the sepulchre of Joseph, in which his body had been lovingly laid away, to witness, and to proclaim his resurrection. In every circumstance of trial, suffering, and humiliation, they witnessed the divine dignity, and purity, and gentleness, and condescension, and humility, and self sacrifice, and wisdom, and grace, and power, of the God-man. And can they ever *forget* so transcendent a scene, or the lessons it inspired? And so with the heirs of salvation. What deliverances in times of trial and danger; what transformations of character and life; what peace, and comfort, and joy, and hope, in millions of hearts, once sad, and wretched, and hopeless, through Christ's abounding grace! What support in sickness, in affliction, in the loss of all earthly treasure, in bearing the cross, in dying at the stake, all from "the promises inherited!" What faithfulness on God's part, in "keeping covenant with his people," through thousands of years! What holy, what thrilling scenes, at millions of bedsides, where the dying believer, with heaven's light flashing from his eyes, and ecstatic beatitudes seen in vision, have shouted: "O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory? Thanks be unto God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Their ministry has made the angels *familiar* with all these things: has brought them into personal contact with them: has afforded them every opportunity to observe, and study, and profit by them. And we may well believe that they have not been *lost* upon them. The effect upon their minds, and character, and destiny, cannot be otherwise than deep, and grand, and lasting. The grace of God, abounding in such fullness, and majestic sweetness, and power, in Christ Jesus the Lord, must grow more and more precious, and wonderful, and glorious, in their eyes, as the ages and the centuries multiply the number of its subjects, and broaden the theatre of its display, and confirm, and ripen, in ever-growing richness of moral beauty and goodness, its precious fruit.

Take, for illustration, the case of *Saul* of Tarsus, and contrast him with *Paul*, the great apostle to the Gentiles. Look at

the young man as he was at the martyrdom of Stephen, and then view him on the eve of his own martyrdom at Rome thirty or thirty-five years after. What contrasts indeed! What a life intervened! What a work for God, for the world, for eternity, was accomplished! What a change had been wrought! Fiction never equaled it. All the philosophy, all the forces of earth, never produced such a transformation. Eternities of human striving never brought forth a result to compare with it. Saul at 27 "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord," and Paul at 65, "ready to be offered," after a career of sanctified activity, and spiritual results, which has not a parallel in the annals of the world, are such totally dissimilar characters, that we are lost in wonder and amazement. And the sole explanation is the *grace of Him* who suddenly shone about him, above the brightness of the sun as he was "nigh to Damascus:" that grace which had already elected him as "a chosen vessel" to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. The angels see in such a moral change, and in its fruitage, an illustration of the Divinity of Christ, and the infinite power and fullness of his grace to save even "the chief of sinners," and to change the bitterest and most determined enemy, into the most loving friend, and loyal devoted subject.

5. *Angels are earnest students of the mysteries of Redemption.* Reserving mainly the consideration of this point for a future chapter, I shall barely touch upon it in this connection. That they are familiar with the whole scheme of Mediatorial government; with the facts and doctrines of the Gospel; with the several dispensations which have succeeded each other in the world; with the promises, and prophecies recorded in the Scriptures, and their fulfillment; and with the history of the Christian Church, from its starting point in Eden, down through all the ages to the present; and that they also comprehend the relations of the Redeemed Church to the Future, both in time and eternity, admits not of a doubt. The testimony of the Scriptures is explicit and abundant on this point. The advent of the Saviour to earth, his whole life in it, and his death upon the cross, were "seen of angels." Some of them were the special messengers of Christ to the Old Testament saints. Others attended on the person of Christ, while

he tabernacled in the flesh, and ministered to him in times of special need. All of them watch with intensest interest, and solicitude, the gradual unfoldings of the Divine purposes, and plans, in relation to our lost race. All of them bend from their seats in glory to witness the progress of Christ's kingdom—its strifes, struggles, reverses, and successes,—the trials, and temptations, and holy living, and triumphant dying, of redeemed sinners. They get new light, new hope, new strength, new faith, new glory, as they study, watch, minister to, and sympathize with the heirs of salvation. *They* will *continue* faithful to the end, whoever else may forsake Christ; *they* will continue to trust in and honor the Cross, though the whole Church on earth apostatize, and the world abjure the faith of the crucified one; *they* will continue their blessed ministries, while there is a tempted soul to be succored, an aching heart to be solaced, a weary and fainting pilgrim to be helped over rough places, and a dying saint to receive cheer in the supreme hour and his released spirit to be carried into "Abraham's bosom." And then will they join their voices with the saints, in singing "the coronation hymn" of the Redeemed, "saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and richness, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." Rev. 5: 12.

6. *The Angels know nothi g of God sive as he is revealed to them in the Person and office work of the "one Mediator."* This is as true of angels as of men. It hath pleased the Father to reveal or declare his existence, perfections, and moral government over his creatures, only in and by means of a Mediator. By him, and for the ends of his moral kingdom, all revelations are made, all laws promulgated, all economies administered, all providences shaped, all agencies and influences subserved. We are also taught in the Scriptures that this system is not designed to be perpetual. It is but *temporary* in its duration. It will accomplish its high purpose, and cease to be. The final, and eternal order of things, will be introduced and determined by it, and then itself will be superseded, or merged into something better and grander still. The period will come—not in time but in eternity,—when Christ will surrender back to the eternal Father the tremen-

dous trust given into his hands to execute, and will himself, with all his wondrous power, and glory, and greatness, and with all his "elect angels" and countless retinue of redeemed, and glorified saints,—a great commonwealth of perfected, and exalted, and rejoicing intelligences—submit to the Father,—be subject to Him, that God may henceforth and forever be "all in all." "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority, and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. . . . And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all. 1 Cor. 15: 24, 25, 28.

7. Finally, angels will be *judged, and rewarded by Jesus Christ in the judgment of the great day.* Already have they been confirmed in their state of moral integrity. Pres. Edwards reasons at considerable length in favor of the idea that this was not done till *after Christ's ascension* into heaven after his resurrection, and that it was in acknowledgment, and reward for their fidelity to him in his amazing humiliation. But may it not have been—is it not most reasonable to suppose that it was done—on the occasion of the rebellion in heaven among their own orders? As appreciative of their continued allegiance, and eminent services, in that first and terrible outburst of creature pride, and rebellion, and hatred, they were sealed over, or elected unto eternal life, by the gracious act of their Divine Leader and Head? How long their probation lasted, we are not told. What was the *duration* of this fierce war between the great contending forces of angelic creatures, is only matter of conjecture. But at its termination, their period of trial or probation was probably happily brought to an end; and by some public and fitting judicial procedure on the part of Christ, they were assured of grace to keep them from falling in all the future of their existence; their crowns and inheritances were made sure to them for ever and ever—come what exposure and collisions there might in the theatre of earth during the long and tremendous conflicts between the devil and his angels, and the passions of wicked men, on the one hand, and Christ and his ransomed Church on the other.

The question however as to *time*, and *occasion*, is a minor one. The process of confirmation may be a *gradual* one—begun at the period I have suggested, and continued during the entire period of their ministering to the saints, until the final judgment. None however will doubt their actual and rapid *growth* in holiness, and moral strength and beauty, under such a wondrous system of discipline, and ministry, and revelation.

The question as to *by whom* they were confirmed in obedience and blessedness, is of greater interest. There is however but one answer that can reasonably be given to this question. It was the "one Mediator," the God-man, who created them in the beginning for his own mediatorial use and glory; who endowed them with such rare gifts, and had exalted them to such positions of authority, and power; who had sustained them in the dread hour when the shock of battle shook the thrones of heaven, and rebellion vacated so many of the seats of the sons of God. It was this self-same "Lamb of God in the midst of the Throne," who thus rewarded the faithful in his heavenly kingdom.

Although confirmed in holiness, and happiness, and put in actual possession of their eternal crowns, the angels will gather at the last Judgment, with mankind, and with their former associates, against whom they fought in heaven, and contended on earth, where the sovereign Judge of all will publicly, and solemnly pass sentence upon every moral creature, and administer the law of final rewards and punishments. There will be but *one* and the same Judge on that occasion, for angels, devils, and men. There will be recognized but *one* authority. There will be only *one* test of character. There will be but *one* administrator. The principles which will underlie, and enter into, and control the decisions of that day of days, will be essentially the *same* in every case. There will be but *one* line of discrimination, and separation drawn, and that line will run through *all* orders of beings of all worlds. And that line, from that time forward, forever and ever, will be a "great gulf fixed." And there will be no passing it. It will mark the boundary line of the everlasting kingdom of righteousness and peace, on the one side, and the

kingdom of evil, of Satan and his angels, and lost men, on the other side. In the full light of that day's proceedings the radical relations of angels to the person, the office, and the cross of Jesus Christ; to the existence, and history, and triumphs, of the Church of God; to the principles which underlie, and characterize, and govern the system of truth revealed in the Scriptures, and that they are, each and all, indebted to the one Divine Saviour, for existence, for preservation, for electing grace, for all their moral, and spiritual attainments, and for their exaltation, and crowns as the "sons of God," and "princes" in his realm. All this will be seen, and appreciated in that eventful day. Hence angels, and saints redeemed, are near akin. They have the same Head. They are members of the same family. They are to have one and the same glorious destiny. They are bound together by a thousand sacred ties, and interests, and are never to be separated.

It follows, from these considerations, that angels, as well as men, have the highest possible interest in the Redemptive system, of which Christ is the head and centre, the wisdom and power, the life and glory, the substance and end. His great atoning sacrifice, is the foundation of the entire moral government of the universe. All creatures exist to subserve the purposes of his administration. They were gathered by him into the kingdom of heaven, have been confirmed in holiness by his electing grace, have been invested with crowns of dignity and dominion, and have been honored with special ministries in the service of his church on earth. And in the final judgment the one Mediator and Saviour will welcome them, in company with his saints, into his Everlasting Kingdom, saying: "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

CHAPTER VII.

THE RELATIONS OF DEVILS TO CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

SECTION I.

THE PROBLEM OF MORAL EVIL.

I DO not propose to discuss this vexed subject; only to glance at it in connection with the course of thought I have marked out for myself. No amount of philosophizing will ever solve the dark problem, or be of any practical value. The time and effort devoted to it, have only served to darken counsel, and intensify the profound mystery. "Who is this that darkeneth counsel with words without knowledge?" Job 38: 2. Whether sin *could have been kept out* of the universe, without impairing the liberty or free agency of moral intelligences, is a question which finite wisdom will never be able to answer. And equally so, whether God *ordained* it as a necessary part of his scheme of moral government, embracing all creatures, and the eternities of duration, or simply *permitted* it in his providence, as an incident in the first and formative period of its administration. It is sufficient for my purpose, to observe, that the moral government of God, as constituted and administered by the "one Mediator," not only contemplated the existence of moral evil, but anticipated it, and made provision to meet it, and subjugate it; and in a way, and by means, that would make the fact apparent to the universe, that its "moral uses" far more than counterbalanced the evils connected with it, many and terrible as they are seen to be. We are called upon to deal with sin simply as a *fact*, a *reality*, of tremendous significance, a moral *factor*, with which we have to do, directly and personally, in all the concernments of life. God will in due time vindicate His relations to it. Sin *does* exist in the world,

and it exists by God's permissive providence; and it exists for wise and holy ends. It has had, in the past of God's government, it has to-day, and it will continue to have until the judgment-day, potent energy as a moral force, and fearful sway as an antagonistic and destructive power in the kingdom of Jesus Christ, in the natural as well as the spiritual.

"In selecting the best possible plan among the millions of possibles open to his contemplation, and deciding to set on foot, or actualize that particular universe, he also made certain all the evils or mischiefs seen to be connected with it. But they are not from him because they are, in this direct manner, made certain or foreordained by him. They come in only as necessary evils that environ the best plan possible. Such are the relations of God to the existence of evil. If it comes, it is not from Him, any more than the ruin of certain children in the school just supposed, are from the benevolent founder. And yet he is not disappointed, or frustrated. Still he governs with a plan, a perfect eternal plan, which comprehends, in its exact date and place, everything which every wrong-doing and revolting spirit will do, even to the end of the world."*

Sin broke out in *heaven* itself early in the administration of the Mediatorial system, in open and fierce warfare against the Divine Head of it, and thinned the ranks of "the sons of God." Led on by "Lucifer, the mightiest, the brightest, and the most honored of all God's creatures," to quote Pres. Edwards, a great number of "his angels" were seduced by him from virtue and allegiance, and induced to join him in the attempt to overthrow the God-man, exalted over them. And sin, then and there, received its first check and punishment, in the defeat and expulsion of rebel angels; and grace then wrought its first, and a most memorable, victory. Sin, under the same malignant agency, gained an entrance into *this* lower world, and ascendency over man in Eden, in the very morning of his creation, and involved his entire posterity down to the end of time, in guilt and ruin.

The Mediatorial Plan, therefore, necessarily embraced in its scope the existence, the agency and control of *evil angels*, as well as of their human dupes and victims. The great problem of evil—the existence of the Devil and his mighty destructive agency—his defiant attempt, and partial success with the celes-

* Nature and the Supernatural. By Horace Bushnell, p. 107.

tial hosts, and his all-powerful sway on earth over an entire race—the very race to which Christ himself belongs in his human nature, and during thousands of years—was all foreseen from eternity, and provision made to meet them, in that system of moral economies and dispensations, of which Christ is the author, centre, and administrator.

Hence evil angels are mediatorial subjects, and form a part of the moral system of agencies and instruments by which the God-man seeks to establish the everlasting kingdom Infinite Wisdom, in the secret counsels of eternity, saw such an element and agency necessary to the highest good, or a means by which such an end might be subserved: Sin was to gain a footing and have sway, for a season. Evil angels, and wicked men, were to have liberty to tempt, and seduce, and defy Omnipotence, and despise, and crucify the Lord of glory. The terrible nature, and fearful consequences of transgression, were to have a theatre sufficiently broad and conspicuous, and ample time and opportunity to disclose their fruit, and call for the intervention of sovereign power, and a sovereign divine remedy.

On the same principle, and for the same reason that God often permits wicked men to rise to power, and great influence in the world, and then "puts a hook in their nose," and leads them captive at his will; or constrains them, against their purpose and will, to minister to his praise, and help on his cause, —on this same principle he has allowed the Devil to gain so strong a footing in his kingdom, and gather to his standard so many legions of fallen spirits, and infidel, and scoffing, and wicked men, only that, when the fullness of time shall have come, he may demonstrate to a witnessing universe, the ease with which he can cope with the united and vaunting powers of darkness; the infinite wisdom, and power, and grace of that remedial system, in the hands of the appointed Mediator, that can *reconcile* such warring elements, snatch elect souls from the very jaws of such "a roaring lion," bring order and beauty out of such a world of chaos and evil, restrain even such wrath, and overrule it, with all the agencies which it has begotten and plied for thousands of years, to the praise of His own superior wisdom and grace.

Although wicked angels have renounced allegiance to Christ, and are fighting to maintain a kingdom in opposition to Him; yet this fact does not sever their connection with him as their Lawgiver, King, and Judge; does not lessen their obligation to "worship him," and obey him, and help forward his grand purposes, for the glory of God, and the highest good of his creatures. They have sinned against Jesus Christ, and are sinning, "with a high hand, and with an outstretched arm." They are directly responsible for the income of moral evil in the universe. They have desolated heaven, and ravaged earth, and digged the pit of hell, by their rebellious abominations. They set Christ's person, and authority at defiance before all "the sons of God." They have set on fire of hell the evil passions of mankind, and been the instigators, and abettors, and chief agents, in all the wickedness, and misery, and ruin under which "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth together in pain to be delivered." And for all this they will be held to strict account, and duly judged and punished by Him who is appointed to judge mankind.

These evil spirits were subject to Christ even in *the days of his humiliation*. They recognized his person and authority, on many occasions recorded in the New Testament, and obeyed his word. They even prayed to him, and besought him not to punish them before their time had come—plainly showing what they were to expect, and did expect at his hands in the future. And at the same time they *hated* him with diabolical hatred, and would have put him to death and made an end of his cause, had they been permitted to act out all their wickedness.

2. *Devils sin against the Person and Kingdom of Christ, and on this ground will be finally judged and punished by Him to whom all judgment is committed by the Father.* Pres. Edwards tersely observes: "It was Jesus Christ *in the human nature*, that was despised and rejected by the rebelling angels." * Their first sin was against the exalted Son of God, who had taken to himself a nature far inferior to the nature of angels, and especially to the nature of the archangel, or Prince of

* Pres. Edwards' Works, Vol. viii, p. 511.

angels, who led off the revolt in heaven, and who aspired to be equal to the "Most High,"—to "ape" the Most High, as Augustine expresses it. Pres. Edwards reasons on this point to show that the immediate *occasion* of this angelic revolt, instigated by the highest creature whom God had made, was the inauguration, so to speak, of the Mediator, in the office of supreme power and glory, and the announcement made in heaven that it was the Divine purpose to make all things, and all creatures, "subject" to Him. Consequently, that it was rank rebellion against "the Lord's anointed" and against the Kingdom he had just set up, for any angel, however exalted in nature, or dignified by rank, or distinguished with honor, to refuse obedience and service. This explanation seems highly rational and probable on the supposition that "*the human nature*" *of Christ* did then really exist and that the angels were cognizant of it, and "despised and rejected" it, and refused to "worship Him" though commanded so to do. But on the commonly received theory, that the *human nature* of Christ had no actual being, was only matter of Divine purpose and covenant, until thousands of years subsequent to these transactions, these views scarcely seem to have sufficient foundation. There seems confusion and inconsistency also in his statements. For, in the passage cited above, he expressly says, that "it was *in the human nature*" that Christ was "despised and rejected," and yet he no where intimates a belief in the *existence* of that nature *prior* to the incarnation; and indeed argues stoutly against Dr. Watts' theory of the pre-existence of the "*human soul*" of Christ. If this inferior creature nature was not really and bodily presented to them for their homage, the occasion seems wanting in provocation sufficient to account for the sudden leaping forth of the spirit of a high-handed and determined rebellion.

However this may be, there is no room to doubt that the rebellion in heaven, on the part of angels, was actuated by the *same spirit* which reigns in "the children of disobedience" on earth, viz., the spirit of bitter *hostility* to the person, and character, and kingdom of the Redeemer. And the same may be said of devils, one and all, since their expulsion from heaven, and during their entire agency here below. From

first to last, they *hate*, with intense hatred, the immaculate man whom they signally failed to seduce; the Divine teacher who exposed their wiles, and warned the world against their machinations; the adorable Saviour, whom so many angels, and saints, delight to worship and serve; the crucified One, whose death on the cross is "the wisdom of God and the power of God" to such multitudes of once sinning men and willing subjects of the Devil. They hate his truths, his people, his "growing empire," his power, his goodness. And all that Satanic wiles, and deceits, and malice, and agency, and hellish depravity, can achieve, has been accomplished. And the conflict will be pressed without intermission, and with ever-increasing bitterness and fury, so long as liberty is allowed them, and the opportunity afforded in the providence of God.

SECTION II.

DEVILS PARTICIPANTS IN THE CONFLICTS OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

THEY themselves originated this great conflict—the conflict of moral ideas, and moral principles, and moral forces, among the sons of God, before Time was, or man existed. Sharp and terrible, although brief, was the shock of battle, when the contending forces were "thrones, dominions, principalities and powers in heavenly places." "The Devil and his angels," were signally worsted in that first encounter; but only to renew the strife, so soon as another theatre, and another opportunity, were afforded them.

Not long did they have to wait. With what wonderful genius and masterly skill has MILTON, in "Paradise Lost," depicted the thoughts, and feelings, and course, of the arch-fiend, in view of Adam's appearance in the garden of this new world, and the hellish arts by which he proposed to circumvent and destroy him! Powerful in the art of persuasion, and master of deceit and lying, as is apparent from the broad sweep he made in the angelic revolt, he found man an easy prey. And yet, in the very hour of his triumph over him the

"heel" of the mighty Conqueror was put upon the "head" of the old serpent; and from that hour to this, there has been "enmity" between the seed of the serpent, and the seed of the woman. The *radical* character of this "enmity;" the extent, the importance, the far-reaching influence and results of this moral and spiritual conflict—are not duly considered by any of us. If we could but see it as *angels* view it from their heavenly places; and appreciate it as they do while ministering to the saints, who are in the actual perils, and strifes of the conflict, we should be amazed at the feeble impression which it now makes upon us; amazed at the little interest we take in it, and the little effort we put forth, when such tremendous issues are before us, and when our own eternal state, and soul's destiny, hang upon it!

Small as the earth is, compared with other planets and systems known to astronomers, it is yet the theatre of the grandest and mightiest, the most radical and all-embracing moral and spiritual conflict, that it is possible for a finite mind to conceive. In this conflict, not of "the ages," but the "eternities," are enlisted all the forces, and agencies, and influences of heaven, earth, and hell. God the Father planning, God the Son executing, and God the Holy Ghost applying the blood of the great atonement. The chief of fallen spirits, with all his legions, and the countless multitudes of Adam's depraved race, are actual combatants in this mortal strife, and have, each and all, virtue, and life, and immortality, involved in the issue. The war too is not a war of words, a war about trifles, a war about minor differences or transient issues. On the contrary, it is a war which touches all the fundamentals of moral being and destiny, a war which concerns questions as broad, and deep, and radical, as good and evil, holiness and sin, life and death, God and the devil, heaven and hell. And the final issues of it will, in every case, be as abiding as eternity, and as weighty as rational and immortal existence itself. The interests dependent on the final outcome of this stupendous warfare on which we may rationally believe is fixed the attention of the universe, and in which every rational creature of God is constrained to bear his share of responsibility, and act his part, for or against virtue, for or against the right, for

or against "the Lord's anointed," are simply *infinite*. It is life or death eternal, to every creature of God, be he angel, man, or devil. It is "the wrath of God and the Lamb;" or, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you." It is a crown, and a mansion in glory, in company with the happy and rejoicing sons of God; or a final portion with the devil and his angels in the prison of despair.

Would God, that he who pens these lines, and he who reads them, might realize how real, and how great is the struggle for the mastery going on continually, not only in the world around him, but in his own soul; and how quickly the great question will be decided, and decided for eternity, as far as it relates to himself!

I am more and more satisfied that the popular conception in the public mind, and the conception prevalent even in the church, and among those whose office is "to watch for souls as they who are to give account to the Judge of quick and dead," in respect to the scope, and potency, and terrible earnestness of this antagonistic kingdom—for such it really is—is wholly inadequate to the case. There is wonderful significance in designating the agency and influence of the Devil and his confederates as a "*Kingdom*," as the Scriptures frequently do; and a kingdom set up in defiance of, and in opposition to, the kingdom of Jesus Christ. It is an *organized* depravity. It has a living head and administrator. It has established laws, and instruments, and agencies. It has numberless subjects, all enlisted in its interests, and obedient to its chief. One spirit, that of eternal "enmity" against God and his exalted Son, dominates. One misery, one doom, is theirs, and they know it; and, smarting under the infliction of Divine wrath, they are confederated and determined to wage this war to the bitter end, and ruin and damn to all eternity as many of God's creatures as it is in their power so to do.

So that the conflict that is raging around us, and within us, and all over the earth, and in which every man is constrained to take an active part, is not a conflict merely of opinions, or about speculative questions, or minor interests, the issue of which is of small moment. On the contrary it is a

conflict of active, compact, tremendous, organized and ably-generaled forces—real antagonistic powers, of vast resources, in actual hostile array, and earnest warfare, one against the other. The Kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, with all its divine laws, and subjects, and agencies, and eternal interests, on the side of virtue, and holiness, and heaven, and life; and the Kingdom of Evil, with the Devil and his angels, and the spirit of lying, and deceit, and all impurity, with Death and Hell following after, on the other side. It is the struggle of "giants," of kings, of "the gods," for the final supremacy. The collision every day felt all along the line of this conflict, is the collision between vast *systems* of thought, and moral influences, and moral forces, and world-wide radical interests. And the tide of battle, as it rages over the immense field, and down the centuries, is watched with intense interest in heaven, and in hell, and in whatsoever other worlds there are moral intelligences to be affected by the result.

The *final issue* of this great conflict is not in the least *doubtful*, however dark the present hour is, or portentous the outlook at times for the future. "Greater is He that is for us, than all they that are against us." Mighty as the Devil is, in his nature, and mighty in his usurped power, and mighty in the work of seduction; there is One who is mightier still, and who holds the bit in his mouth; who has drawn around him a circle beyond which he cannot pass; who is using him for his own purposes, and who, when they are all answered, and the set time, fixed away back in eternity, has come, He will put his "heel" upon him and crush him, as easily as we crush a worm.

Our "anointed Leader," "the Captain of Salvation," was found *equal* to the hour, when the Head of the angel hosts in heaven suddenly drew the sword of battle, and with all his confederates, made war upon Him. He was *equal* to the hour, when the Serpent desolated Eden, and subjugated the head and representative of a new race, and a race brought nearer to God than any other by reason of its assumption by his Divine Son; and on the very ruins of an apostasy which seemed total and final, he laid the foundations of His spiritual Temple,

which is to be the wonder and the delight of the eternal ages, and "the topmost stone of which will be carried up with shoutings of 'Grace, grace unto it.'" He has *never* been found *wanting*, in any crisis of the Church's history, during six thousand years of her conflict with the powers of darkness. And, surely, we have in all this, the assurance, and the earnest, of more signal displays of power and glory, and more splendid achievements of grace, when the *final* shock of these long warring Kingdoms shall have come. Our "Immanuel" will then "gird on his thigh" the sword which has flashed defeat to his enemies on a thousand battle-fields, and in fierce encounters without number; and, at the head of "legions of holy angels," and a countless multitude of saints, He will ride forth "conquering and to conquer," and will achieve such a "Waterloo" as human history has never recorded.

Let us not forget—no not for an hour, not on any occasion, however seemingly trivial—that *neutrality* in this pending conflict is impossible. We are for Christ, altogether and always; or we are against him. We "cannot serve two masters," in this controversy. To oppose Christ and his Kingdom, is to make war upon all of our most sacred and enduring interests; to disregard obligations as weighty as God ever laid upon a creature; to outdo even devils in the enormity and aggravation of our guilt. Even to "neglect so great salvation;" to fail "to lay hold on the hope set before us in the gospel"—to live and die "unreconciled to God" in the world of the Cross, and by the blood of the Cross, which is the only reconciliation possible to a sinner; to spend our precious years of probation, on such a theatre as this, all ablaze with Divine manifestations, and all astir with such amazing activities, and with such mighty powers fiercely contending for the supremacy—for the rule over our minds and hearts,—and yet be *indifferent*, uninterested, practically caring only for "mammon," and absorbed in the petty cares, and fleeting pleasures of time and sense—will be to merit and receive the scorn of angels, and the derision of devils.

The Scriptures teach that "the Devil and his angels," in the mysterious permissive providence of God, under the pres-

ent dispensation of things, are suffered to *antagonize* the Kingdom which Christ came to establish here. That they have access to the children of men, and power over them; that they are permitted to ply them with temptations to evil, to ensnare them with their wiles, and to work among them, in all sorts of evil ways, to their injury, and, alas! in the majority of instances, to their eternal undoing. That they are allowed to obscure the Word, to deny and resist the work of the Spirit, to corrupt and draw away the church from Christ and holiness, to instigate hatreds, and envies, and controversies, and schisms, and to set up "idols of silver and gold" in men's hearts, and induce them to serve "mammon" instead of God. To foment wars, and drench the earth in human blood; to stir up the vilest passions of men, and let loose the worst elements of discord, lust, anarchy, and hate; and to riot in human virtue and happiness, and make this earth, once so fair and good, a very "pandemonium." That all the world has gone after the Evil One—"*lyeth in the wicked one!*" "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth," says Christ, "will draw all men to *me*,"—John 12: 32—implying that now they were the children and servants of the Devil. Even the framework of nature feels the deadly touch of "the old serpent," and "groaneth and travaileth together in pain to be delivered" from this fell possession.

How far evil spirits are responsible for the destructive *physical* agencies which are constantly exerted on mankind—such as diseases, cyclones, earthquakes, famines, pestilences, terrible storms, and shipwrecks, and the like, we know not. But the intimations of Scripture plainly imply that they have a hand in these things—a far more extensive agency in causing them—than is commonly supposed. Men attribute them to chance, to fate, to natural laws, to atmospheric changes and conditions, or to God's angry providence; when the *real* cause often is that terrible malignant agency, which stirred up war in heaven, and which brought Adam under its dominion, and which has dominated in men's lives and cursed the earth from the beginning. It were far more proper to curse the *Devil* for these great and sore visitations, than it is to curse *Providence;* and to abjure, and help destroy his dreadful dominion.

That the permissive providence of God extends to such a class of destructive physical agencies, is apparent from the titles applied to the controlling spirit of all evil, the head of the kingdom of sin. He is designated as the "wicked one," the "prince of this world," the "god of this world," the "prince of the power of the air," and so on—all of which imply *control* over this earthly system. Read also what is recorded in the experience of Job. His bodily visitations are directly and positively ascribed to "Satan." Chap. 2: 4–8. Earth, remember is the "seat" of his power. Do we sufficiently consider the fact, that when thrust out of heaven, he and his angels were cast down to "*earth*" (See Rev. 12: 9), hot with their rebellion, and ready to regain lost power. *This* is his new "empire," won by him when he artfully seduced and subdued under him the Head of this lower creation. He is here as the sworn enemy of Christ and his people, as a usurper in the place which rightfully belongs to God in the hearts of his creatures, and in the world over which man was made to have dominion. He is *recognized* in scripture as the head of this whole earthly system, as possessing and controlling, and using, for his own evil ends, the hearts and lives of wicked men, and as claiming the world, with all that pertains to it, as his own. That his dominion extends to physical things, and laws, and forces, admits not of a doubt.

This view is confirmed by what is recorded in the New Testament concerning "demoniacal possessions." Evil spirits did then inflict both bodily and mental diseases and torments of various kinds. Read the account of the man possessed with a "dumb spirit," which Christ cast out. "Oft times it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters to destroy him," was the testimony of the father, when he brought him to Christ. And even then, to show his spirit of malignity and defiance, "when he saw him straightway the spirit tare him, and he fell on the ground, and wallowed, foaming." "Thou deaf and dumb spirit, I charge thee come out of him, and enter no more into him. And the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him; and he was as one dead, inasmuch as many said, He is dead." Mark 9: 17–27. Manifestly this was not a case of healing, or moral conversion, but simply the dispossession of

satanic power in the realm of the physical. Two thousand "swine" also were "choked" by evil spirits at one time in the sea of Galilee.

And we have no authority, on scripture ground, to say that the permissive liberty then exercised by them has since been taken away. On the contrary, prophetic utterances lead us to expect that this class of phenomena will be increased, and intensified as the "latter day" draws nigh. Satan's rage will wax hotter and hotter, and break forth in more and more terrible demonstrations, as the battle of the great day is pressed against him, and he sees the power, on which he has staked such fearful odds, slipping from him. As matter of history the Devil has as much scope and power in the world to day as he *ever* had, and *more*. His empire is all the while extending. Knowing that his time is short, he bestirs himself as never before, as the condition of the church and world to-day abundantly declares. He never had at command so many and such powerful forces, material, moral, and spiritual, as at this very time. Especially is this true in respect to the physical universe. In how marked a manner has he incarnated his own spirit, his subtle, powerful, antagonistic agency, in the "progress" of science, and in the increased activities and preponderance of the natural life of man! Verily has "the god of this world" *blinded* the eyes of our scientists, and philosophers, and *so* blinded them that they no longer see God in his works. The heavens, to their eyes, no longer "declare his glory," nor "the firmament his handiwork." To them, the universe is without a Creator, or a Lawgiver. Man has ceased to be regarded as a son of the great heavenly Father, and is declared to be only a developed "monkey," or an organized "protoplasm," in the hands of Fate, the sport of an hour; and then he dies as the beast dies, and that is the end of him! On the top-most wave of a godless materialism sits to day the grand adversary of God and man jubilant—directing its course, energizing its forces, subsidizing its multiform and ever-swelling influences, and turning the whole against the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ.

No intelligent man, who attentively observes and studies human actions and characters in their individuality, and in

their national and universal aspects, can reasonably *question* the fact, or the potency, or the universality, of this malign supernatural agency. The extreme and general wickedness of mankind, even by those who believe, as the writer does, in "total depravity," can not be rationally explained on any other hypothesis. I am aware that it is quite fashionable in these days of "advanced" thinking, to doubt, deny, and even ridicule the doctrine of a personal Devil, and the interference of such a being in the affairs of men. But it is impossible to harmonize the Scriptures with the denial of Satan's personality, or of his mighty diabolical power over individual men, and over this whole earthly system. They are full, explicit, undeniable in their testimony on both these points. The doctrine is set forth in a great variety of ways—in direct assertion, in narrative form, in warning, in entreaty, and in the prayer which our Saviour taught his disciples.

"Satan thus stands out upon the inspired page as a personal being, a conscious, emotional, voluntary individuality, as much so as Paul or Christ. Archbishop Whately could employ his genius to discredit the personal existence of Satan no more successfully than he did to disprove that of Napoleon. The Bible every where treats him as a great commanding, ruling, and powerful spirit. Christ was accused of casting out devils by Beelzebub, the chief of the devils (Luke 11: 15). The supremacy of Satan among fallen spirits is recognized whenever they are classed together, as 'the devil and his angels.' He is represented as the 'God of this world,' ruling it as a sovereign to the extent of his power. Christ recognized the leadership of Satan, and the unity of his subjects under his control, when he said, "If Satan be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand?"*

Instead of citing a multitude of scripture texts, in which this doctrine is clearly taught, I shall content myself with a single passage—a passage which brings it out with great prominence and significance, and in most interesting aspects and relations:

"Then was Jesus led up of the spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward a hungered. And when the tempter came

* Satan's Devices and the Believer's Victory. By Rev. William L. Parsons, p. 16.

to him he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down, for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus saith unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Again the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him, and behold, angels came and ministered unto him." *

The writer of course is familiar with the interpretation given to this remarkable narrative by the Rationalistic school, and the various theories of those who, claiming to receive the Scriptures as the Word of God, yet explain away its significance, and make it absolutely meaningless. Does the narrative fairly admit the rationalistic interpretation, or the interpretation foisted upon it by the "higher criticism" of modern speculation? I say not, assuredly, without doing extreme violence to the whole language, the structure, the spirit, and the purpose of the record.

Two personages are here definitely presented to view: Jesus and the Devil—the one the tempted and the other the tempter. *Both* are described as voluntary, active, and responsible agents in the transaction recorded. Both are represented as speaking, arguing, and acting a part, and a part in harmony with the character given to each, and the occasion for which they met as definitely stated. It is also expressly declared that Jesus was "*led up by the Spirit* into the wilderness" for the very purpose of being "*tempted of the devil.*" The very words used by the one, in presenting his temptations, and in seeking to make them effective, and of the other in resisting them, and in rebuking and discomfiting the other, are here

*Matt. 4: 1-11.

given. And the whole transaction was "seen of angels," who ministered to the bodily wants of the victor, as soon as "the devil leaveth him."

We must admit, it seems to me, the obvious objective construction of this historical narrative, or reject the whole of it as sheer fiction. Was Christ *really* "tempted" to evil, as the Bible explicitly affirms? Is the *fact* matter of historical verity? If so, *who* tempted him, if not the Devil? Either the principle of evil inhered in the human nature of Christ, as in all other men, and so the temptation may have been self-originated, which no one dares to affirm, or it came from without himself. If from without, how, or by whom? It certainly did not come from God, for he tempts no man. It did not come from man, for Christ was alone in the wilderness. He was not tempted by good angels, for they came and ministered to him. Hence it follows that the *Devil* was the agent in the temptation scene, if any such temptation transpired as Matthew records. And this is just what the evangelist declares. He affirms that, "Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be *tempted of the devil.*" And after "the forty days and forty nights" of fasting were ended, "the *tempter came to him.*" It was then a living agent, a distinct personage; and he had not been present with Jesus during the long season of fasting and spiritual communion with the Father, preparatory to his entrance on his mission. All things were now ready for the great conflict, which had been prearranged in heaven, and the Devil draws nigh and instantly begins his assault in words of consummate adroitness: "If thou be the Son of God command that these stones be made bread." And when repulsed, he returns to the assault, and with greater daring appeals to Christ's religious feelings. But again he is repulsed. Desperate, he makes a final and most audacious attack on Christ's personal integrity, only to be overwhelmingly defeated. "Then the devil leaveth him."

If such plain, intelligent, and consistent statement of fact, in relation to the personality of the Devil, and the methods by which he sought to seduce from moral virtue the man Christ Jesus and bring him under his subjection can, on any theory short of an infidel one, be explained away, as an "historical"

narrative and the whole be reduced to an allegorical or panoramic representation, or a subjective process, then the mystery of the incarnation, and all the miracles, and doctrines, and supernatural manifestations of the Bible can also be resolved into poetic fiction, or spiritual allegory, or pictorial representations. The liberty taken with the divine oracles, even by many who profess to accept them as inspired of God, under the influence of what is styled in these days, "the higher" and "the lower criticism"—criticism evolved largely from the Rationalistic school, which would speculate and philosophize away everything which is supernatural in the Scriptures—is simply shocking. The marvel is, not that there is so much skepticism and infidelity creeping into the church, and into the ministry itself, and unsettling the faith of many, and shaking confidence in the Bible; but the real marvel is, that there is any faith at all left in the world in a supernatural revelation.

"IT IS WRITTEN," was the quiet and masterly answer of the divine Jesus; the same answer, thrice repeated, to the varying devices and thrusts of the adversary. The spirit of Truth, incarnated in the Logos, confronted the spirit of Lying and Deceit, incarnated in Satan, and by a word fitly spoken, silenced his tongue, and demonstrated to him his utter impotence against such a weapon. Can we follow a safer example? Is there any weapon so effective against infidelity, against error of any and every kind, against sin and wrong-doing, both in the individual and in society, as simple scripture, just as the spirit of inspiration dictated it? Can we meet the tempter in a better way, no matter in what form, under what guise, or along what path, he assails us, than by saying, in simplicity, in directness, and with decision, "It is written"? One text of scripture to the point, is worth more than whole volumes of philosophy, or any amount of logic and reasoning. Scripture will palsy his lying tongue and dismiss the tempter, when everything else fails to do so.

It is scarcely possible to conceive of testimony *stronger* than that which the Scriptures contain in respect to the Devil's

personality and great and soul-destroying influence over men. But we are not restricted to this kind of testimony, ample as it is, and sufficient as it should be to all who accept the Bible as the word of God. There is sufficient independent testimony to convince any fair and candid man, even if he rejects the doctrine on the authority of inspiration, as I shall attempt to show in the next section.

I am aware that the views expressed above will be assailed on both philosophical and theological grounds. I shall not, in this connection, formally defend them, but will only say a word or two in passing.

The influence of mind on mind, is a universally admitted fact. Intelligence is the supreme factor of all rational being, and dominates all laws, physical, mental, and moral. Given intelligence, and the opportunity to use it, and you establish a basis for social power or influence just in proportion to the degree of intelligence, and the favorable conditions governing its exercise. The Infinite Mind is capable of acting directly on the minds of all intelligences, in the way of mental illumination, or moral suasion. The angelic mind is all the while acting on human mind. Their very ministry to the saints is based upon this law of social mental influence. And the human mind is all the while acting on the angelic mind, and enters into the life of heaven, and to an extent, it may be, far beyond our conceptions; as the extent of their influence on our minds and destinies, far transcends our ideas. And the same is true of evil spirits. They have access to us, and the power, and the means to influence us, just as truly as good angels. And, beyond all question, their power in the world, their power over every man in it, is far *greater* than the influence of holy angels, for the reason that we are an *apostate* race and world, and all their agencies work directly in the line of our natural inclinations. And then this whole earthly system is corrupt, "carnal," and is a powerful, ever-present, almost irresistible engine in the hands of evil angels to consummate their hellish work. And so also one man exercises power over another man. He does it often unconsciously, without design, in various ways, and by a thousand agencies. His

mind, through visible or invisible means, acts on minds all about him, and it may be on minds remote from him. And to such an *extent* is this the case, that scarcely a thought, or an act of any individual is the product of his *own* thinking and self-causation. Mind outside of himself—the Divine mind, or angelic ministries, or evil spirits, or the influence of human thought and example and agency, have produced them, or shaped them, or given them moral character and expression.

We cannot explain the *modus operandi*. It is not necessary. The fact is apparent. Our philosophy must, and does accept it.

And this influence or agency, is not limited to the realms of mind and morals. Our *own spirits* have influence over *matter*, according to the laws which govern us in this mundane sphere. "We find," as Prest. Edwards says, "that from such motions of mind there follows such an alteration in such and such matter, according to such established rules; and those rules are entirely at the pleasure of him who establishes them. And why we should not think that God establishes other rules for other spirits, I cannot imagine. And I do not see why other spirits should not have influence on matter according to other laws; or why, if we suppose spirits have influence on matter, that it must necessarily be according to the same established rules as our spirits." * Hence the philosophical objection falls to the ground.

The theological opposition to the doctrine is multiform in its character. Essentially, however, *two* points will cover it. One relates to the Devil. It is denied by infidelity, of course, that such a being exists; and not a few who claim to receive the Scriptures, either doubt or scout the doctrine of the diabolical personality. From the days of Zoroaster, a class of philosophers have held that two principles have existed together from eternity, one of evil and one of good, and on this basis of fact they construct their philosophy. And this philosophy, beyond question, has had great influence on the theologies of the ages. And there is a *revival* of it, in our day; more or less modified by circumstances. Losing their faith in the Scripture doctrine of a personal Devil, men are likely to

* Edwards' Works, Vol. VIII., page 485.

fall into the error of believing that evil is a *principle* and not a power; that "Satan," the "devil," are generic terms and not the prince or personal head of the kingdom of sin. How such views can be reconciled with the explicit testimony and the whole drift of Scripture teaching, passes my comprehension. We can no more think of an impersonal *Devil* than an impersonal *God*. The scriptures establish the personality of the one as fully, and by the same means, as they do the personality of the other. There is no more ground, in reason or scripture, for saying that "Satan or the Devil, is simply a name which generalizes bad persons or spirits, with their bad thoughts, and characters, many in one," than for saying that God is a name which generalizes good persons or spirits, with their holy thoughts and characters, many in one. Both propositions are equally untenable.

And I am not a little surprised that so profound a thinker, and acute a reasoner, as the late Dr. Horace Bushnell, should have fallen into this popular error. But it is evident that he gave the subject only a very superficial examination. He does not evince his usual discrimination and thoroughness in discussing it. His argument is weak, if sheer assumptions, and sweeping assertions, can be called argument. He quotes, with strong approval, Davenport's answer to the question, "What is the Devil?"—thus: "The multitude of apostate angels which, by pride, and blasphemy against God, and malice against man, became liars and murderers, by tempting him to that sin." *

Is it conceivable that an evil "*principle*" can tempt a man to evil? No more than that the law of gravitation can do it. In the realm of *nature* such a thing might be, but not in the realm of *spirit*, least of all in the realm of *moral forces*. Sin is not a principle simply, but an *embodied* principle; it has the life and force of *personality*, everywhere and always. The Devil is never spoken of as a "principle," but always as a *person*, a living, speaking, tempting, active *agent*. He is never spoken of as the aggregate of evil spirits, the impersonation of all depravity. The many titles given to him in the Bible, indicate that he is not an abstraction, a representative name, but a power, a moral and spiritual force, the head and chief of a

* Nature and the Supernatural, p. 135.

kingdom of powers and personalities, banded together, striving together, under his headship and tremendous personal influence, to resist the Lord's anointed. The idea that the Devil is simply a "multitude of apostate angels," each fighting in his own way, and doing what mischief he can, finds no countenance in the word of God, and none whatever in reason. *Who*, according to this theory, tempted Adam? Who tempted Christ? A "*multitude* of apostate angels?" It is simply preposterous. It is the "*kingdom*" feature of sin – an *organized*, compacted, confederated kingdom of personalities and moral forces, combined in one dreadful league of eternal hatred and ruin, and under that all-powerful, all-accomplished and experienced leader, which drew after him a "multitude of apostate angels"—it is this idea, this fact, which imparts such significance to the problem of evil.

Dr. Edward Beecher, in discussing the reasons for the Incarnation says in words of stirring eloquence:

"He became incarnate in order to defeat the designs of evil angels, especially of the Devil, their leader and head. This is directly asserted by John: 'For this purpose the Son of God was manifested (in the flesh) that he might destroy the works of the Devil:' and Paul asserts that he became incarnate, 'that he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil.' . . . It is a fundamental doctrine of the Bible that a conflict exists between these fallen angels and God. . . . They manifest a peculiar hatred of man, probably because from the human race a church is to be redeemed, who shall be exalted to the place whence they fell. . . . When he came in the nature of man, the Devil attempted to seduce and ruin him. At the same time evil angels showed peculiar malignity towards men by possessing their bodies; yet they knew Christ, and trembled before him, and besought him 'not to torment them before the time.' At one time Christ in the midst of his sorrows rejoiced in spirit, and assigned as a reason that he 'saw Satan fall as lightning from heaven.'

"And again, in an hour of distress, he thus breaks forth: 'Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour, but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name:' and being comforted by a voice from heaven, assuring him that thus it should be, he adds in holy exultation, 'Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the Prince of this world be cast out.' . . . Nor did his disciples escape their malignant power.

Peter fell before the Adversary, nor had he forgotten his fall when in his epistle he endeavors to strengthen the brethren in these emphatic words: 'Be sober, be vigilant, for your adversary, the devil, goeth about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.' Paul also says: 'We contend not merely with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers; and with spiritual wickedness in high places;' and warns us to 'take the whole armor of God, that we may be prepared to stand against the wiles of the devil.' . . .

"Many we know treat with contempt these ideas of a mighty conflict. But could their eyes be opened, as the prophet of God of old, opened the eyes of his fearful servant, that he might behold the chariots and horsemen of fire that surrounded them, who can conceive of their amazement? They would perceive that crowns and empires are trifles in comparison with that moral conflict which is raging in the empire of God. He would perceive the marshaled ranks of opposing minds; and the rolling of a mighty flood of destiny, in the midst of which kings and empires are but as a drop of the ocean. Alas for the dreamers of this world, they do not pass the limits of their senses! They hear not the sound of the trumpet, nor the clashing arms of encountering hosts, and fondly imagine there is no conflict. They have no eyes of faith to behold the movements of the eternal Spirit, nor the combination of rebel hosts in his moral empire, nor of angels of light who are ministers to the heirs of salvation, nor the glory of the incarnate mediator, who came to destroy the works of the Devil, and who moves on from conquering to conquer." *

SECTION III.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE EVIL ONE.

Human observation and experience the world over, among all peoples, races, and classes, and in every age and condition of society, and every degree of civilization, fully confirm and bear out the inspired testimony in reference to the doctrine of the previous section. Philosophy teaches it no less clearly than revelation. False religions, as well as the true, the world

* The American Biblical Repository. Third Series. Vol. vi, pp. 155–157.

over, recognize and emphasize it. Man's total depravity, under every condition of being and development—his universal corruption and wickedness as developed and illustrated in the history of the race, from Adam in paradise down to our own time—can be rationally explained only by admitting what the Scriptures so plainly teach in reference to the Devil and his "works." And they who deny this only adequate solution of this awful problem, are bound to suggest a more rational and satisfactory one. Have they done it? Can they do it? Until this is done, it will be wiser for the teachers of religion and mankind at large, to adhere to the plain and obvious teaching of the Bible, and cast the criticism of the rationalistic school to "the moles and the bats."

It is matter for just surprise that persons whose views of man's depravity are the least conformed to scripture—who even hold to the "Moral Rectitude of Human Nature"*—are the most decided in their denial of the Devil's existence, and scout the idea of his active agency on mankind; and that too in view of the inveterate, unnatural, universal, and terrible depravities which prevail in and curse the world. In spite of their theory, they make out a case against man's moral nature more positively evil and hopeless than do the advocates of the "total depravity" doctrine, who charge no little of man's known depravity and wickedness on "the devil and his angels."

No man can sharply watch the workings of his own mind and inward emotions, and their outward expression, especially in their moral aspects, and not discover, at times, the presence and influence of this evil genius, not simply as a subtle influence, but also as an active agent. The sudden injection of an evil thought into your mind, independently of the law of association—a thought foreign to your whole nature, and to your mind's present mood, and from which you instinctively recoil as from the touch of a serpent. A sudden, and, at times, almost irresistible impulse to do some great wrong, either to yourself or to some fellow creature—a wrong which you had not premeditated, and would not do voluntarily for the world. The sudden phrenzy which seizes on a man, until that moment

* The title of a book by George W. Burnap, D. D., in which this doctrine is stoutly argued.

sane and self-possessed, and which drives him on to murder wife or child, or to commit suicide, against the first law of nature, as well as the law of God—an impulse like that which seized on "the herd of swine" in our Saviour's time, under "demoniacal possession" and they "ran violently down a steep place into the sea and were choked." The leaping forth and the wide and destructive sweep of fanatic rage, and mob violence, and "labor strikes," and "Irish troubles," and "Nihilist" doctrines and madness, bursting forth at times, without premonition, and without provocation or adequate cause, like a vast conflagration, and as unmanageable and violent, sweeping down life and property. The "panic," as we term it, which seizes on a crowd in the presence of real or imaginary danger, and instantly stultifies reason, and transforms the mass into idiots or brutes, and makes them an easy prey to the angel of Disaster. How will you *explain* such phenomena? Such insane, downright mad, and often devilish conduct on the part of great masses of men and women, as well as isolated individuals, all capable of reasoning and acting rationally, without admitting some *other* agency than that of man's and the operation of the natural laws of his physical and mental being? The only rational solution is the admission of a powerful spirit-force, acting simultaneously on men's minds in the interest of the kingdom of evil.

The same is true of Spiritualism, which is disturbing and unsettling the minds of multitudes in this enlightened age. It has already subverted the religious faith, and the moral integrity of very many, in the church and out of it, and is spreading its baneful influence everywhere. How is it to be met by the ministry, and by intelligent laymen? In common with the mass of staid and conservative ministers, I have, until recently, pooh-poohed it, as a delusion, a species of jugglery, which could not stand before investigation, and would die out of itself, if let alone. But circumstances have forced me of late to turn my special attention to it, and to study it carefully, and conscientiously, in the light of scripture, and reason, and observation, as well as in the writings of those who claim to be the apostles of this "new gospel." And the result I have

reached in my own mind is, that Spiritualism cannot be dismissed with a sneer, nor solved on the principle of collusion and deception: that it is likewise a *moral* problem of great interest and significance, and as such calls for serious and searching inquiry on the part of the friends of religion, that its true inwardness may be exposed, and the fearful tide of immorality and infidelity which it is letting loose upon the world may be checked.

That there is an immense amount of deception and lying practiced in connection with it, for purposes of gain, or moral evil, is readily admitted, even by the better class of those who accept this "new gospel!" Still there are "manifestations" which cannot be explained on natural principles—which nothing but the admission of some supernatural power can solve, if we are to receive the testimony of many credible witnesses. The writer himself has witnessed such, though he was never at a séance, or by any act of his own ever been put in communication with the spirit world, and has always hated and denounced what he believed was a silly and mischievous imposture. My opinion of it *now* is, that it is something infinitely more revolting and dreadful than a clever human imposture. No philosophy can account for this class of mental and physical phenomena which *ignores the doctrine of the Evil One!* His hand, his philosophy, is conspicuously seen in the whole movement. The *morality* of it, the fruit of the tree, unmistakably points to its source—"the father of lies." Even its advocates are forced to admit, and do admit, enough to stamp it with eternal infamy.

That the "Devil and his angels" have power and opportunity to work miracles of lying wonders—to deceive, and mislead men, and subordinate even nature to their fell purpose—admits not of a doubt. It is a scripture truth, and a truth verified, times without number, in human history. And in this case the spiritists *invite* the presence and agency of the Evil One; put themselves in his hands; do all that is in their power to establish communication with him. Every favoring condition and opportunity are furnished to his hands. Instead of obeying the Saviour's solemn injunction: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one," they *reverse*

the petition, and go deliberately in the way of it and put themselves, soul and body, unresistingly, into his hands. And as their *faith* is in his power to work wonders, to deceive and ruin, so will the Devil work. And still *greater* marvels may be looked for, than any yet recorded in their books. Was the Devil ever known to be modest in the assertion of his power, or backward in the use of his opportunity? He has every motive for devising and helping on such a belief. It is indeed a *master-device* of the arch deceiver himself. It is a most pernicious and demoralizing trick. It not only "leads captive silly women," and weak-minded, and evil-minded men, but it also ensnares a class of minds from whom better things ought to be expected. The Devil has greatly enlarged the domain of his power, by means of it, strengthened his grip on the race, and widened the entrance to his kingdom.

So with *Mormonism*, the vilest social and religious system that ever deluded and cursed man—a monstrosity of huge proportions, and appalling character—taken altogether, more devilish in spirit, and form, and fruit, than any idolatrous system of the dark ages. And yet is has been injected into the very heart of Christendom, in the middle of the nineteenth century, and in this Christian land, under the shadow of our free institutions, and in contact with our boasted Christian civilization. A social, political, and religious despotism of the most radical character, a community which practically subverts the family constitution which God ordained, and riots in beastly sensuality,—a religious faith which far outstrips in its pretensions, the Prophet of Mecca, or the power of the Pope. And yet, see how it lives, and thrives, and gathers converts from every quarter of the globe; and in defiance of public sentiment, and law, and gospel, and even decency; and in spite of all attempts to reform it, or suppress it, lifts to-day its brazen face to the heavens, and defies God and man!

And there is no *accounting* for its existence, at least for its rapid spread, from such a miserable beginning, in "Joe Smith," and his "Mormon Bible;" for its amazing vitality, its firm grip on so great a community, its endurance and thrift in

such an enlightened age, in such a free, Bible-land as ours, under such a terrible discipline as it experienced in its earlier years, and notwithstanding the death of its founders, and of its arch-apostle, Brigham Young. There is no accounting for this social, political, and spiritual phenomena on natural or philosophical principles. There is but *one* rational solution. It is not a simple delusion, the work of a clever fanatic, or shrewd knave. It is the Devil's work. His agency is rank in its whole genius and structure—in giving it favor with decent but misled men and women, in imparting vitality to the system,—in helping it on by his wiles and deceits, and in instigating murder, and other horrid crimes, in the name of Religion, and under the sanction of a direct revelation from God, whenever necessary to advance its interests.

Belief in the doctrine of a personal Devil, and his great power in this evil world, is, therefore, a *demand of philosophy as really as it is of scripture.* A thousand mental, moral, and physical phenomena are explainable in no other way. The problem of human character, and of human life and destiny, is insolvable on any other hypothesis.

Even the perplexing subject of Insanity is destined to receive new light from the study and better comprehension of the Scriptural doctrine in relation to the Evil One. Now it is not understood, even in its first principles, and least of all in its scientific aspects. Science breaks down in every attempt to deal with it: to determine its causes, define its laws, detect its presence, or fix its limitations. What pitiful scenes are enacted in our courts of justice with our most noted "experts" as witnesses! one pitted against another: scarcely two agreed: opposite and contradictory opinions sworn to! And that, not where the question at issue is the occult law of causation, or the nice distinction between mental and moral insanity; but the simple question of *fact* as to the existence of insanity in a given case.

Take the case of the wretched Guiteau, who has just swung from the gallows for one of the most damning murders that ever cried to Heaven for vengeance. It will be admitted, by most candid men, that the *question as to his insanity has not*

been clearly settled for all time. Grave doubts exist in the minds of multitudes, both legal and lay. A great array of "experts," and eminent medical men, who have made diseases of the mind a specialty, protested. Had he been a *common* murderer, he would not have been hung. But an outraged and weeping nation demanded his life. And had his counsel made out a case of insanity ever so clearly, it would not have been safe to withhold the sacrifice. But the *pitiful* part is, that in so noted a case, with the treasury of the government at command, and the eyes of the whole civilized world looking on, legal learning and acumen, and the best scientific and expert wisdom of the nation *failed to settle beyond all reasonable doubt the question of his sanity;* and the miserable culprit was finally legally put to death with a dark cloud of doubt resting on the case.

Now the same evil agency which sways the natural elements to evil ends: which inflames the body with lust and passion, and fills it with disease and pain: which dominates the emotions and affections, and makes them channels of his depravities—has power to *derange the mind*, temporarily or permanently; to break down or impair the balance-wheel in this wondrous mechanism; to suspend the judgment, at times, silence conscience, and blind the mental eye so as to make "the worse appear the better reason;" cause an act of horrible wickedness to appear, the moment before committing it, innocent, and even praiseworthy. That this is the explanation, the philosophy, of manifold acts of human wickedness—of the downfall of so many men who, up to the fatal hour in which they forged, or embezzled, or did some other equally immoral act, had kept their integrity; of so many horrible murders, in the absence of all motive, with no malice towards their victims, and with the certainty of detection and punishment overtaking them, seems at least highly probable—the most rational that our present knowledge is able to supply.

But does not such a view of the case *excuse*, in whole or in part, the wickedness of men? Not in the least, where the antecedents are all right: never, except where a man by no responsible act of his own, is for the time incapacitated to know good and evil, or to control his own actions. No more than

the drunkard is excusable for murdering his wife, while maddened by liquor, which he voluntarily drank, knowing its effects. But this view *does* impart great and solemn emphasis to the warnings of Scripture, to "beware of temptation," to "go not in the way of evil," to "resist the Devil," to beware of his "devices," to "give no place" to temptation, no not for a moment. It does impart singular significance to the petition in our Lord's prayer, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil," or from "the *evil one*," as the revised version has it, thereby greatly intensifying the prayer, and endorsing the doctrine of the personality of the Devil.

It admits not of a doubt that very much of the power of Satan, and of his success in leading men into sin and sustaining his dominion over them to the last, in spite of all motive, and warning, arises from his *wonderful knowledge of man and his masterly skill* in the use of his weapons of warfare. In this respect the study of the methods of the adversary, and of the secret of his astonishing success, is highly important to all who have "the care of souls." A thorough knowledge of *man as man* is essential to eminent success in the ministry. Thousands of preachers make a failure in the work of the ministry because they have never mastered the science of the action of mind on mind. No amount of talent, or culture, or faithfulness in preaching, and in pastoral work, will supply the lack of this. The great adversary is an overmatch for the man who is ignorant of the philosophy of mind, and especially of the philosophy of the Devil's temptations. The Bible is highly suggestive on this point. In the numerous *titles* given to the Devil, his characteristics and methods are plainly intimated. His great subtlety and skill in ensnaring souls, and in adapting his temptations to the person, the occasion, and the laws of influence, are repeatedly set forth.

And is it any wonder that the Devil has become such an *adept* in the use of his seductive arts? He has made man his constant and special *study* for six thousand years! He has seen him in every possible phase, mood, condition, circumstance, and experience. He thoroughly comprehends all the laws of his being, all his motives to action, all his weaknesses,

and besetting sins, all the subtleties of mind, and passion, and all the influences which move and sway them. He has the *experience* of all the past, with evil angels and with sinning men, to aid him. He knows the peculiarities of each individual man, his temper, his inner self and outward life, and when, and how, and with what "wiles" or particular "devices" to assail and lead him captive. All the energies and activities of his mighty intellect are also enlisted in this dreadful work—viz., the eternal ruin of beings made in the image of God, and beings for whom the Son of God endured the death of the cross. He has legions of fallen spirits at his command, who are as busy as he, in plying their deceptions. Tempting men to sin and to death, is his one occupation, and he has made himself a thorough master of the science how to do it. Mankind, so far as we know, are the *only* beings he can torment and ruin outside of hell.

The temptation of *Eden* was a master-stroke of subtlety and deception. It is impossible to conceive of an act more adroitly planned, or more skillfully executed. He first seduced the *woman*, "the weaker vessel." He took her at the opportune moment, when she was alone, standing by the forbidden tree, "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the midst of the garden," with its tempting fruit in view,—ruminating, doubtless, in her own mind *why* they were not permitted to eat of that particular fruit. And then with what consummate tact does he query, and insinuate, and assert, and finally give the lie direct to God, and plant in her heart the seeds of ambition,—and the work was done!

So with the temptation in the *wilderness*. The Devil comprehended the situation thoroughly, when he made his assault on the Second Adam. Jesus was alone. All his surroundings were favorable to the design of the adversary. He had "fasted now forty days and forty nights, and was afterward an hungered." It was "his hour." The cravings of hunger were intense. The desire for food was natural, and innocent. There was no bread at hand, and no supply could be readily obtained. "Command that these stones be made bread." There could be no sin in *that*. If he *were* "the Son of God," he had but to speak the word and his hunger would be satisfied.—You

claim to be *Divine*. You will have to establish your claims by working miracles. Begin it now. Make proof of your power to do it by casting yourself down from this pinnacle. "If thou be the Son of God," "his angels shall bear thee up."—You came to set up a kingdom on earth. You are about to announce yourself as the long expected Messiah—the Prince of the house of David. I am "the god of this world." "All the kingdoms of it and the glory" of it, are mine. "All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me."

If the Devil, by means of his infernal arts and his knowledge how to use them to the best advantage, made so easy a prey of our first parents, while in a state of moral innocence, though with natures susceptible to evil; his task is much easier, after so long and wide an experience, on their descendants, who are born to evil as the sparks are to fly upward. The truth must be confessed, that we are not *awake* to the dangers which ever menace us from this source; to the agencies and influences which assail us at every step in life, in every relation, in every duty, and most of all on the field of spiritual conflict with the Evil One. There is no one subject on which the New Testament speaks more frequently, or more earnestly, in warning, entreaty, and command. Happy will it be for the man who takes heed to the warning words of Him who knoweth the Devil's power, and the Devil's seductive arts.

SECTION IV.

THE PERSONAL ENCOUNTER OF CHRIST AND THE LEADER OF HIS REBELLIOUS SUBJECTS.

We have already considered briefly the Temptation of our Lord in the wilderness of Judea. But we here view it under a different aspect, and for a different purpose.

It was *fitting* that the respective Heads of the two great Kingdoms which exist in the moral universe and are striving each for the mastery over mankind, viz., the Kingdom of the

Lord Jesus Christ, embracing God and all holy angels, and redeemed saints, and all the moral and spiritual laws and influences which are connected with the Mediatorial system; and the kingdom of the Devil, who has arrayed himself against "the Lord's anointed," and rallied around him an immense force, and pressed into his service a dread array of evil and hostile influences—it was fitting that these great representative Chiefs of Good and Evil, should meet in personal conflict and measure weapons one with the other.

Christ's incarnation had immediate reference to the Devil, who had enthroned himself in the hearts and in the allegiance of men. He came to destroy this usurper's power, and deliver the world from his terrible dominion. John testifies: "For this purpose the Son of man was manifest, that he might destroy the works of the devil." And Paul asserts that he "became incarnate that he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil." The Devil of course knew the fact and the object of the incarnation, and watched the course of events with intensest solicitude. His keen eye had traced the history of Jesus from the moment the angels had announced his birth to the shepherds of Bethlehem, coupled with that wondrous announcement, "Glory to God in the highest; on earth, peace, good will to men," down to the hour of his baptism at the Jordan by his forerunner, when "the Spirit of God descended upon him like a dove," and there came another voice out of heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Matt. 3: 16, 17.

We may believe the tempter took in the situation of things clearly and sharply at this crisis in the Saviour's history. The obscure birth of Jesus; his humble surroundings, his poverty and friendlessness, his modest deportment, and the utter absence of anything to distinguish him from his associates in the same humble walk of life. Seeing all this, and knowing that he was about to "declare himself" as the long-expected Deliverer of Israel, we cannot doubt that Satan longed for the opportunity to meet him in single combat, and believed that the coveted prey was well-nigh within his grasp. From the silence of the Scriptures, we might infer that he had "let him alone" all these years, "bided his time," that he might make

his victory the more conspicuous, and Christ's discomfiture and subjugation the more humiliating and crushing when it came.

It is apparent from the Scriptures, that the Devil's desire in this matter was understood in heaven, and arrangements were made to afford him the desired opportunity; for it is written: "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil." The wilderness here referred to is probably the one lying east of the Jordan, and not the Sinaitic wilderness, as some commentators teach. The language of the evangelist, "led up," applies well to the ascent to this locality from Bethabara where John was baptizing. In that wilderness district "we have provision for the objective reality of all the incidents. Nebo is near at hand, and Jerusalem is within easy striking distance." Christ did not go, observe, of his own accord: the Devil needed no prompting. He was there by his own choice and volition, when "the hour" had come. This fact is highly significant. Even our Lord, although conscious of his integrity and power to resist temptation, never sought it; never rushed into it, never provoked or challenged it. He never shrank from it; never swerved from his purpose or duty to avoid it. And yet he never purposely or wantonly encountered it. Hence his example lends additional force to his warning to his followers, "to go not in the way of temptation." And we disregard the precept at our peril, as the experience of mankind so sadly illustrates. But, on the contrary, the Devil needs no soliciting. No matter where we are—whether in the desert or in the city; whether alone or in society; whether in our study or in the pulpit; whether performing religious duty on the Sabbath, or in our place of business during the week; the *Devil is there*, in person or by an emissary, in that very spot, *always* there, never absent, ready, intent on his business, watching and waiting for his opportunity; and never—*no never*—failing instantly to seize upon it and make the most of it, to advance his kingdom.

Our Saviour himself doubtless was aware of the Devil's design; knew wherefore the Spirit had led him out into the wilderness, just at this crisis in his history, when he was to break the silence and come forth from his obscurity and

privacy, and appear before the people in the character of a public Teacher sent from God to declare the most astonishing doctrines that ever found utterance from human lips. The meeting was not accidental in any sense.

To prepare himself for the signal encounter, and also for the mighty work he had assumed, we read that Jesus "fasted forty days and forty nights." We are not to infer that simple abstinence from food was the only, or the chief thing he did. It was a season of intense and prolonged mental and spiritual exercises, during which his physical nature, his bodily appetites, were held in complete subjection; and the mind, the lofty spirit of Jesus, asserted itself, and held communion with the Father of spirits, and trained its powers for the peculiar and stupendous ministry of suffering and of grace, which he was now about to enter upon.

The Devil, in the meanwhile, was watchful and waiting. Had he no *misgivings*, think you, as he witnessed that long fast, those holy communings with the spirit within, and with God the Father of all? No misgivings as he looked into that face, radiant with divine benignity, and the divine glory? so calm, so serene, so self-possessed? Had he no *scruples* in making his hellish assault on the integrity of so divine a personage? None whatsoever, it would seem. True he had once already encountered his sworn foe, and been himself dreadfully worsted, and was still suffering under that defeat. But *now* the circumstances, the surroundings, the external appearances, were all different, essentially, wonderfully different. The theatre of the struggle now impending is not heaven, amidst "thrones, dominions, principalities and powers;" but a rocky desert, where solitude reigned, and there was nothing to inspire or fortify the victim but the strength of his own inward virtue. There is no "halo of glory" about the person to be assaulted. He holds no sceptre in his hand. There are none of the insignia of royalty about him. No angels wait upon him; and he has no following as yet among the sons of men. He has wrought no miracle in attestation of his Divine sonship and mission. He stands there before the Tempter—simply as a man,—a man of humble birth, and few advantages, "the son of a carpenter," "the Nazarene" peasant, despised

even by his fellows on this account; wholly inexperienced in the ways of the world, unsophisticated, and unsuspecting. Poor, without resources of any kind, and yet anticipating a grand mission, and just now weak from long fasting, and ready to perish from hunger—how can he withstand the "wiles" of the adversary? Hell burns and rages in the heart of the assailer; while satanic art, and satanic purpose direct and animate the blow that is to strike down the Son of God, and blast the hopes of the world. And yet with what *caution* does he make his approaches to the innocent one! With what words of seeming pity and sympathy, and even piety, does he open the conflict! He succeeded thus with the *First* Adam; why should he fail with the *Second*, especially, when all the circumstances surrounding him were so specially favorable to success? No violence was needed. No demonstrations were necessary. To get his artful temptations lodged in that simple and isolated man's heart; to seduce from immaculate virtue that "meek and lowly one," by an act of worship there in the desert, apart from men; to induce a man starving for food, where none could be had, only to command the stones at his feet to become bread, at his kindly suggestion;—*that* was all that was needed. *That* he knew would destroy his old enemy and former victor. *That* would ruin the mission he came from heaven to perform. *That* would send dismay and weeping through all the shining ranks in glory, and retrieve his own fortunes, which now seemed so utterly wrecked and lost.

Little did the Devil *anticipate* the utter rout and overthrow which he was, for the second time, to experience at the hands of the Lord's anointed—an overthrow, an humiliation, a defeat and rout, if possible, more signal, and decisive, and truly wonderful—than was his original defeat on the plains of heaven; one more conspicuously and grandly illustrating the inherent power and glory of Moral Goodness, as it inhered in the human nature of the Divine Man, and thus asserted its supreme excellence. The impotence of Sin, with all its hosts of lying spirits, and evil forces, in a fair, square fight with moral Virtue, was never before or since so strikingly displayed as in that Calm Presence, under fiery temptation, in the solitude of the wilderness, resisting with infinite ease the severest thrusts

of Satan, in a hand to hand encounter! not so much as ruffled in spirit or manner, without aid from angels or men, and without the help of miraculous power,—completely and forever subjecting to Him the arch enemy of God and man, and coming out of the conflict without so much as "the smell of fire on his garments!" Even in his extreme "humiliation," and with all the attending circumstances favoring the Evil One, the Devil was found to be no match for the Son of Man! The personal virtue of the Second Adam, in spite of his lowly state, and seeming adverse circumstances, rose to the height of infinite Majesty and Glory, before which, abashed and quailing, the master-spirit of evil fled the field. And from the silence of Scripture, we may conclude that he never again molested the person of the incarnated One.

"Get thee behind me Satan!" These were the calm and kingly words of the tempted man of "Nazareth," in the supreme hour of the fiercest personal conflict that the heavens ever witnessed. And with the words there went forth a majestic power that compelled obedience; and "the Devil leaveth him," straightly, "and behold, angels came and ministered unto him."

SECTION V.

THE MORAL CHARACTER AND DESTINY OF DEVILS WROUGHT OUT UNDER THE MEDIATORIAL SYSTEM.

The narrow and restricted view of the scope of Christ's kingdom so common in the church, finds no sanction in Scripture. Mediation embraces devils, as well as mankind, and the elect angels. They are subject to the kingdom of Jesus Christ; are under his control, and are to subserve the ends and purposes of his moral administration. When, or on what occasion, they came under his immediate sway—whether at their creation, or, as Pres. Edwards seems to teach, when the Son of God, in "his human nature," was placed in supreme power—is mainly matter of conjecture. It is not essential to the argu-

ment to settle this question. It is the *fact* alone that we have to do with, and that cannot be fairly called in question.

We find abundant testimony in the Scriptures, that devils are familiar with the person, the character, and the distinctive mission and ministry of Jesus Christ as the Saviour of the world; with the mystery of the incarnation; with the revelation of the facts and doctrines which constitute the Christian system of truth, as embraced in the Old and New Testaments; with the various dispensations of wisdom and grace made to the world since Adam forfeited the Divine favor; and with the history of Christ's kingdom on earth, from its establishment in Eden. And, familiar with all these displays of the Divine character and purposes; witnessing the wonderful progress of this moral kingdom, and the history of Providence in relation to it; themselves active participants, during the thousands of years, in the conflicts which have characterized and marked its course from the beginning, and will continue to do until the end of time—their own active and powerful opposing agency having much to do with the final results of the mediatorial system, and with the everlasting kingdom of God;—all this being true, it necessarily follows that their *own moral character and destiny will be deeply and essentially affected* by the work of the "one Mediator." They will both be materially *different* from what they would have been had there been no mediatorial expedient ordained of God; no expiation for sin on the cross, no "Jesus of Nazareth," whom they assailed, hated, opposed, and led on the Jews to crucify; no redeemed Church, gathered by Divine love and grace out of this world, which they have wrecked and cursed, and which they sought, so long and fiercely, to corrupt and destroy; no displays of the Divine mercy and forgiveness to "rebels doomed to die;" no triumphs achieved by the Cross over evil angels and rebellious men; no filling, with holy and glorified saints, the very seats in heaven from which they had been hurled; no restoration of peace and harmony to a warring kingdom by means of the reconciling blood shed on Calvary.

True the *offers of salvation* are not made to them. No door has ever been opened in heaven for their re-entrance. They "sinned the sin which is unto death;" and for them there

never was a redemption provided. But will this fact lessen their personal guilt; will it destroy their responsibility for their own eternal undoing, and the undoing of countless millions of the human race? Will it justify or palliate their fierce, malignant, persistent, unprovoked hostility to the person and office-work of the world's Redeemer? Will it excuse their diabolical agency in deceiving, and corrupting, and dragging down into their own dreadful state of wickedness, and hopeless ruin, our first parents and all the generations of their descendants to the end of time? Will not the guilt of their sin, in rejecting and opposing Christ's kingdom in this world, which he died to save, and in hardening their hearts in rebellion under all the matchless displays of the cross, and in extending the awful circle of rebellion and moral ruin, and in perpetuating the kingdom of Evil, be seen, in the judgment of the great day, infinitely to exceed the guilt of their *first* transgression? That was simply against authority; against the person of the Sovereign; and the occasion may have furnished some provocation. But nothing of the kind can be pleaded under the administration which succeeded the fall of Adam. They have been under all the revelations, if not the actual discipline and grace of the cross, and for thousands of years. They have seen the fruit of Christ's atoning love and sway in millions of souls reclaimed from a life of sin, and saved from hell, and fitted for and put in possession of just such crowns and mansions in heavenly places, as they once held and forfeited.

The cross of Christ will therefore stamp these hellish spirits—so steeped in iniquity, so hoary in confirmed rebellion, so ripe for final destruction—with the deepest brands of moral turpitude and degradation, and will be the occasion of deeper and sorer punishment to them in the future state. The glorious achievements of the Mediatorial system, of which the Cross is the center, and exponent, and glory; the immense accession to the welfare and happiness of God's universe, by means of it; the gathering together, through its agency and influence, of a blessed family or commonwealth, united in sacred and indissoluble bonds, with the Lamb in the midst of the throne as its living Head—a multitude of elect and confirmed angels,

and ransomed and glorified saints which no man can number —a transcendently glorious array of happy and rejoicing spirits;—all these things, seen in the full light of eternal day will serve to set off in darker colors and in more appalling contrast, the horribly depraved character of devils; the terribly malignant agency which they have performed; the eternally blasted existence which they have achieved for themselves; and the unutterable horrors of the damnation which they are to experience forever and ever!

SECTION VI.

THE DEVILS JUDGED IN THE FINAL DAY AND CONDEMNED AND PUNISHED BY THE SON OF MAN.

It has already been stated, that the punishment of rebellious angels anterior to the creation of man, as well as the reward of those who "kept their first estate," were evidently *judicial* acts—the acts of a moral judge, of the one Supreme Judge, who is divinely appointed to pass upon the character and destiny of every creature of God, and fix his eternal state. The same august Personage will sit on the judgment-throne, in that day of days, which will determine the character of every probationer, be he angel, devil, or man, and seal him over unto life, or death, everlasting. And He will sit there by virtue of the authority vested in him from all eternity; and the *ground* of his judgment will be essentially the same in every case, viz., the resultant moral effects of the Redemptive plan which God devised and put into practical force in his Kingdom. The devils will not question his right to sit in judgment upon them. They have never questioned that right in all their rebellious career. When he was on earth, and went about doing good, casting out "unclean spirits," and "dumb spirits," from those "possessed" of them, and in various ways destroying or checking their work, they knew him, and recognized his authority over them, and plainly intimated their

knowledge of the fact that he will punish them in the last day as they deserve. "There was once a notable attempt to shake off the yoke of the moral government of God, both as lawgiver and judge. But they miserably failed in it. Christ acted as their judge then, in casting these proud spirits out of heaven, and binding them in chains of darkness unto the judgment of the final day."*

But Christ's mission to earth was not to take liberty from the devils, or judicially punish them for their sin against mankind, as he had done for their first sin in heaven against his authority. It was a *spiritual* mission, a mission of mercy and grace; a mission to sow the seeds of moral ideas and principles in the world that, under his fostering providence, and the work of the Spirit, should at last uproot the kingdom of Satan, and in the end, make it to appear as a part of his own system of government, and made by him to contribute essentially to the final grand end of Redemption.

But *now* the day of trial and conflict is *ended*—forever closed—and the "Throne of Judgment" is set in heaven, and the "one Mediator," Lawgiver, Governor, Administrator, Redeemer, in the person of Him who died on the cross to "reconcile all things" unto God, "whether they be things in heaven, or things in earth, or things under the earth," takes his seat "in the midst of the throne." And there are gathered in one vast assemblage, divided in twain by "the great white throne," "the righteous" on the "right," and "the wicked" on the "left," all beings subject to God's moral judgment. Then the "enmity" which Christ put between "the seed of the woman" and "the seed of the Devil," will be brought out in such fullness of display, and abundance of fruitage, as to astonish and deeply impress all who behold them. Then the "heel" of the crucified One will be effectually put on the "head" of the old serpent and all his vile progeny, and will bruise it to the death. Now they are "reserved in chains under darkness," against that awful day; but then will they be dragged forth into the light of day—and such a day!—to know and hear their doom, from lips which have spoken such words of infinite tenderness, and sweetness, and life, to multi-

*Prest. Edwards' Works, Vol. VI, p. 386.

tudes of angels and men. *Until* that day arrives, they will continue to exercise the liberty given to every moral and accountable creature of God; to pursue the bent of their own inclinations; to act out all the depravities which hell has bred in their natures; to do their utmost to tear down the Cross of the Son of God, and wipe out the cause of Christianity from the face of the earth. And God only knows the full sphere and scope of their destructive agency. It is not limited to this world. It has been felt in *heaven*, we know, and heaven may represent numberless worlds. And it is not impossible, it is not irrational to suppose, that, if other worlds are peopled with rational moral intelligences, the kingdom of the Evil One has extended its presence and agency there also. But in the last judgment the appointed limits will have been reached. Henceforth Evil will have its prescribed boundary. The chains will be made fast, and the Devil and his angels will be thrust into the inner prison, "to go no more out forever."

The *principles* on which they will be judged, and condemned to "everlasting destruction from his presence and from the glory of his power," will be in no essential particular, other than those applied to mankind. The principle of Mediation, the principle of the atonement as the basis of all God's government over his moral creatures, the principles of eternal unchangeable truth, rectitude, holiness, justice, and goodness, will rule every judgment in that hour. The formal offer of pardon and life, on the ground of a justifying faith in Christ, may never have been made to devils and rejected by them, as is the case with gospel sinners of the human race. Still they will be shown on that occasion, to be really guilty of the blood of Christ: guilty certainly of causing the ruin of Adam and his posterity: guilty of sinning against the Holy Ghost in his ministry in behalf of the children of men: guilty of sinning against the person and the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ; and of resistance, active, bitter, unrelenting, from first to last, to the whole plan of redeeming grace: guilty of causing an amount of misery, and sin, and death, in time and in eternity, which no finite mind can fathom or gauge. Their *first* act of rebellion, atrocious as it was, and sorely pun-

ished as it was, will appear, in the concentrated light of that day of revelation, to be innocence itself, contrasted with their *future* sinning, through all time, and so long as permitted of God—sinning under Mediatorial revelations in successive dispensations—sinning against all the love and mercy and grace exhibited in the Cross—sinning against the testimony and wonderful history of the Christian Church through all the ages to the day of its espousal by the heavenly "Bridegroom." What "a great crowd of witnesses" will appear there to confront and dismay them with their testimony! Not only will their SIN in all this be brought to light and established, but their *punishment* will be enhanced proportionately, by reason of their long and diabolical agency in ruining mankind, and trying to defeat and overthrow the kingdom of the Redeemer on earth. The hell of devils will be darker, and hotter, and more dreadful for reasons growing out of and connected with the system of Grace.

Then and there will terminate their evil agency in the kingdom of God. Having answered the end for which it was suffered, in the Divine economy - and it is, confessedly, the darkest and most difficult problem which lies within the range of finite investigation—a mighty Hand will be laid upon it, and a Voice, like the sound of seven thunders, will declare, "Hitherto shalt thou come, and no farther, here shall thy proud waves be staid."

The liberty hitherto prescribed to them, will be possible no longer. They have only abused that liberty to perpetrate moral outrages against the kingdom and people of the Most High God; and now the righteous Judge will deprive them of it, utterly and forever. Never again will they go forth to deceive, to tempt, to destroy the sons of God. Never more will they roam at large from world to world, and "scatter firebrands, arrows and death" among the children of light. By a solemn judicial act, they will be *separated* and removed from the sight of, and from all intercourse with, the rest of creation,—as totally unfit to mix with them, unworthy of personal liberty, abandoned of God, and given over to suffering,—and, joined by the wretched outcasts of mankind, whom they have made

as vile and worthless outcasts as themselves, they will be "banished" from the presence of the Lamb, and from the great and happy family of loyal subjects. And in some far off world which the light of day will never reach, and where the music of glad hearts will never be heard, they will have their portion – a world "prepared for the devil and his angels." And henceforth there will be "peace." The noise of the conflict between these great warring kingdoms, which, like the sound of many waters, has been heard all down the centuries, will be hushed. And in its stead there will break forth in heaven, and it will be shouted along the whole line of angelic hosts, and be caught up by an innumerable company of redeemed saints: "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever."

Henceforth and forever, all things will be reconciled, both that are in heaven and that are in earth, reconciled in Christ, and by Christ, to the glory of his grace. The sublime conception of Christianity will now be accomplished—the Kingdom of God; the implanting of a Divine rule in lost men, and the gathering, at last, of all peoples and kindreds of the earth into a vast universal order of peace and righteousness under Christ, the anointed King.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE HUMILIATION OF CHRIST.

In what did his "humiliation" actually consist? The Scriptures dwell much on the fact, the varied forms, and the significance of Christ's "humiliation." But they do not give us a clear and definite conception as to what constituted it; nor do they furnish the data for a full and satisfactory answer to the question. To understand the subject fully, it would be necessary to know his *antecedent* condition, and just what changes of person and condition he underwent in the act of incarnation —in passing from the Mediatorial throne in heaven, to the manger in Bethlehem. That there was a tremendous descent in outward condition, the surrender of vast dignity and power and glory, and the assumption of the utmost lowliness and weakness, and dependence, admits not a doubt. This much is clear on the surface of revelation.

And yet "the mystery" of the incarnation is not explained in the least. No light is shed on the question at the outset of this section. We read in Acts 8: 33, "In his humiliation his judgment was taken away." And again in Philippians 2: 6–11, "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

It will be readily admitted, by all who have considered the subject, that the *Divine* nature of the Son of God, was not a factor in this humiliation, whatever the character or degree of it. In the nature of things that could suffer no eclipse, no diminution, no possible humiliation; take on itself no creature weakness, be subject to none of the infirmities or sufferings which the man Christ Jesus did really assume and undergo. It could not abdicate its inherent and unchangeable sovereignty and glory. It could not become an "infant of days;" could not be tempted, could not suffer, or sorrow, or weep, or die, as the man Jesus did. The Divine nature or personality was *incarnated* in his human body and soul; or rather the human nature by an infinite condescension on the part of the Son of God was assumed or joined to the Divine nature. But the two were entirely separate and distinct, nevertheless; the Divine did not mingle with or form a part of the human nature of Christ. The Divine, in distinction from the human, and to show its amazing superiority to it, and the fact that it was in no wise dependent upon it, often asserted itself, in the days of his humiliation, and demonstrated that "the fullness of the Godhead dwelt in Him," even in that condition; that while he was "the reputed son of Mary" and the Nazarene carpenter, he was none the less "the Son of the Highest," and "the King of glory." Absolute Deity dwelt in the incarnate Person, as really as in the Father; as truly as it did in the Mediator in his heavenly state, before the incarnation. The *Divine* nature of Christ, therefore, had no part in the "humiliation" which he underwent in exchanging heaven for earth, a throne for a manger, glory for suffering.

Hence, by natural sequence, we conclude that his humiliation pertained only to the *human* or *creature* nature of the Divine-man. What change of condition, rank, authority, office, or attributes, he underwent in exchanging heaven for a season, and being born under the law of sin, and in the likeness of sinful flesh, must have affected only his *humanity.* But it is difficult to see *how* this was or could be humbled, especially in a sense and degree to answer the inspired representation of the matter, on the common theory, as I understand that theory, if such it can be designated. *If the human body and soul of*

Jesus Christ had no actual existence previous to his conception in the womb of the virgin Mary; if they existed only in "the eternal purpose" of God and "covenant of grace," made with the Son before the foundation of the world, and in the types, and shadows, and promises, under the Old Testament dispensation—then where was there sufficient *ground-work* for so great a humiliation? What elements entered into it? What personal sacrifice and condescension were really performed? There was nothing in a *purpose,* existing in the Divine mind; nothing in the covenant of grace entered into with the Father; nothing in the types and ceremonies of the Mosaic law which prefigured transactions yet in the womb of the future—there was nothing, I assert, in one or all of these things to cause or be the occasion of "humiliation" to the incarnate Redeemer. In a word, *if the human nature of Christ,* which I have attempted to show, was essential to constitute the Mediatorial Person and Office, *had, in fact, no tangible existence in heaven anterior to the birth of Jesus;* had not been recognized of God there, and honored from the very origin of the Mediatorial constitution; had not, in union with the Divine Sonship, filled the Throne of the heavenly glory and wielded the sceptre of kingly power, and in the exercise of his office already "reconciled things in heaven," by overthrowing and punishing rebellious angels, and confirming in obedience "the sons of God," who "kept their first estate"—then I am at a loss to conceive *how,* or in *what* essential particulars, Christ suffered "humiliation," in being born of a woman into our world. What dishonor, what deprivation, what suffering, or what personal merit was there in the event? If the transaction was simply a *birth,* with no antecedents to make it ever memorable and illustrious; and a *growth* to manhood according to the established laws of generation and development, then what so *distinguished* it above all other births that ever happened among men, and made it an event so important a to attract the heavenly hosts and bring them down to announce it; and also so important as to constitute a new Epoch in time, the Christian Era, to be henceforth, to the end of the world, recognized as the starting point in human reckoning?

I confess that the commonly received conceptions on this

subject, though it is extremely difficult to know definitely what they are, as I am not aware that they have ever been formulated, never gave me satisfaction. They never seemed rational in themselves, nor consistent with Scripture representations. And they certainly leave the mind in a very confused and muddled state. But on the hypothesis of the *pre-existence of the human nature* of Christ—a rational soul and an actual body, united to his Divine nature, the same as subsequent to his descent into our world, (and even Pres. Edwards affirms that Christ judged and punished fallen angels in his "*human nature*") (the italics are his)—that the Person of the "one Mediator" existed in perfection before the creation of man, before the rebellion in heaven, and there administered the government of God, according to the purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord before the world was—supposing this, a flood of new and glorious light breaks forth. Things which before seemed confused, incongruous, contradictory, are reconciled; and the extent, the reality, and the significance of Christ's "humiliation" become apparent. Henceforth we cease to wonder at the great concourse of angels which came down from heaven to announce the wondrous Birth, and hold watch over "the manger" in which lay "the Lord of glory," "wrapped in swaddling clothes."

CHAPTER IX.

THE PRE-EXISTENCE OF CHRIST'S HUMAN NATURE ANTERIOR TO HIS INCARNATION.

I DO not state this as an ascertained *fact*, or assume it to be a fact at all, in my argument. I simply present it as an hypothesis, that serves better than any other I have ever met with, to explain, so far perhaps as it is explainable, this part of "the great mystery of God." And even as an hypothesis, I am not presumptuous enough to suppose that it will be generally accepted. On the contrary I have no doubt that the mass of readers will contemn and ridicule it as a shallow conceit, or a baseless speculation, unscriptural and contrary to reason. Content shall I be, if a thoughtful mind, here and there, as I know such will be found, shall give it due weight and consideration, and be provoked by it to investigate for himself a vast field of religious thought which has as yet received little or no attention from Christian thinkers, and yet one which has intimate relations to the Kingdom of our Lord. Even so profound a mind as that of Pres. Edwards—a mind which studied more carefully and fully, more accurately and grandly, and better comprehended the scheme of Redemption than any other writer,—seems wholly lost, bewildered, confused, on this subject, and makes statements which contradict each other, and leave his readers in a state of "confusion worse confounded." And if this can be said, and said truthfully, of him; much stronger language might be used in characterizing the crude conceptions and statements of the unthinking mass of theological writers and preachers on this subject. In all my intercourse with ministers during half a century I have never yet found *one* who had ever given thought enough to the matter to be able to express an intelligent view in relation to it.

That the hypothesis involves *difficulties, objections,* serious, and not a few it may be, is readily granted. But are they greater and more numerous than those which lie against the old hypothesis? I claim to the contrary. May I ask the reader himself, if *he* have any settled and well defined views, according to the common modes of theological sentiment and expression, as to the person, office and administration of the "one Mediator between God and men," *prior* to his birth in Bethlehem? say, at the period of angel revolt? or at the time of man's creation and fall under temptation? and during four thousand years of history under the Old Testament dispensation, when Christ as the "Angel of the Covenant," "the Angel Jehovah" (Elohim), so often visibly appeared, and in human form and likeness, to some of his distinguished servants, and held intercourse with them? Is it *possible,* by any amount of reflection and study, to attain to such views? I venture to affirm not. But, accepting the hypothesis I suggest, we have ample foundation for all that the Scriptures assert or imply respecting Christ's mediatorship and administration of affairs in the heavenly kingdom, antecedent to his humiliation in this greatly inferior and essentially different earthly system. We are able, also, in some faint degree, to measure the extent of his condescension and "humiliation." We see at a glance the immense sacrifice he made in his human nature,—(he could make sacrifice in no other)—in his rank, and condition, and surroundings, when he descended from the Throne of Mediatorial exaltation and glory, which he had filled from the "beginning of all things," laid aside the sceptre and the robe of regal power, dismissed for a season his immense retinue of angelic spirits, and consented to subject himself to the low and dependent condition involved in his earthly state. Here was real sacrifice indeed—great condescension, self-abnegation and humiliation unparalleled. Here was an example of humility and self-sacrifice, set before *angels,* who were conspicuous witnesses of it all, and before the *saints* of all ages, most illustrious and impressive. It was likewise a fitting prelude to that wondrous life of humility, lowliness, and serving, which He came to enact on earth for the benefit of mankind; and to that death on the cross which was to close his earthly career,—

a spectacle, in itself, and in the ends and results it was to achieve, unique, grand, never-to-be-forgotten.

This theory will also explain, and give new meaning and interest, to many Scripture passages which have greatly perplexed commentators. As I do not propose to pursue this argument to any considerable extent, in the present work, I shall restrict myself therefore to the examination of *two* passages only, and these selected almost at random. In the first chapter of Genesis we read: "And God said, Let us make man in *our image*, and after *our likeness*. . . . So God created man *in his own image;* in *the image of God* created he him." Is there a man in all the world, who has considered the meaning and significance of these extraordinary words, who is really *satisfied* with the common interpretation given them? I trow not. And for the best of reasons. It is incomprehensible, the literal surface meaning. A finite creature made in the image of the Infinite Creator! Flesh and blood, "formed out of the dust of the earth," created in the likeness of the Creative Eternal Spirit! It is impossible; it is an absurdity. God is a spirit, in his very essence, and in every attribute and perfection of his nature; and how can a material form and organism, in any degree or particular, resemble Him?

But on the hypothesis, that the *human nature* of Christ was an antecedent reality; that he was in very deed "the first-born of every creature," as the Bible asserts; that He, as the Head and Type of the race and order of beings, afterward to be created and placed in this lower world, among whom He, in the fullness of time, was to appear, and to whom he was to make in person the revelation of his mercy and grace, and in whose behalf finally to die on the cross, was the *pattern* of this new creation;—taking such a view of the antecedents of the "Second Adam," "the Lord from heaven"—the meaning and fitness of these remarkable words become at once apparent. *Adam* was not the *original* of the race: the model came down from heaven: the Type pre-existed. Eden simply reproduced a form, an "image," a "likeness," already familiar in heaven, and "exalted there to the right hand of God." The "image," seen in Adam, was not the image of the uncreated *God*, but the image of the *super-humanity* associated with the

eternal Son. The "likeness" which characterized Adam, and stamped him as the glorious Head of this new creation, was the likeness of the DIVINE-MAN, so long regnant in heaven, and who in the fullness of time was to be "lifted up" on the cross of Calvary, that he might "draw all men unto him."

That wondrous form and likeness—the very "brightness" of the invisible God—was a familiar sight to the eyes of angels before it was reproduced in humbler type, but in verisimilitude, in the garden of Eden. And although that form represented a race inferior to their own, yet they had paid homage to it, in obedience to the command, "Let all the angels worship Him." And is it any wonder then—if this be true,—that they "sang for joy" at the birth of *crea'ion*, as they did at the birth of *Jesus?* They witnessed the processes of creation in its several successive stages, rising higher and higher in the types of life, until the Head, the Lord of it all, came forth, and was put in dominion over it. It was not so much over the production of the dry land, and the water and the firmament, and of the various types of vegetable and animal life, which they beheld in their order and perfection, that the "sons of God sang" their anthem of praise, as it was the appearance of MAN on the theatre of this new world, and his exaltation to kingship over it. They recognized in HIM a "likeness," not only familiar to them, but already inexpressibly dear to them, and one which had brought the great unseen God nearer to them, down to them, in unspeakable condescension and glory. The Man of Eden was to them really a *second* Adam. The Divine *original*, in mysterious union with the Son of the Highest, they had long worshiped. The appearance of his "*likeness*" now, in a new world, and at the head of a new system, was in fulfillment of Divine purposes, reaching back into a past eternity—purposes no doubt revealed to angels before their accomplishment—for that is one of the marked features of all God's plans, viz., *to typify, and prepare, and pre-arrange in one form of life or dispensation, for a succeeding one.* Now, in the minds of these witnessing "morning stars," the time had come for fresh revelations in the kingdom of God: the world that was to be the theatre of Christ's passion, and cross, and re-

deeming triumphs, was at length created, and fitted up, and Adam placed at the head of it. And so they sang together a song of angelic rejoicing.

Contrast this interpretation of the meaning of this remarkable scripture with the common idea, that this "image," in which Adam was made, consisted in "knowledge, righteousness, and holiness." But were not *all* moral beings, all the angels, made in *that* same image? Can there be any *doubt* on that point? Then what was there *peculiar* in the case of *man?* Why this remarkable language of the Creator—this solemn consultation as it were of the Godhead—"Come, let us make *man* in our image"—as if here was to be a *new, unique* type of being—a race to possess the very likeness of God himself—to be made with this Divine impress upon it, so that it is to be a "birthright," and not an inheritance, a divine implanting, and not a growth, a mark to distinguish the race in all time from all other races.

Moreover, if this is the meaning of scripture, then *Adam alone* was created in the divine image, for "knowledge, righteousness, and holiness" were lost in the fall, and not one of all his descendants has been made in that moral likeness.

There is another view of the matter which I never saw developed, but one which powerfully confirms my position. It is stated thus in the Catholic Creed of Christendom: "And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, *Begotten, not made,* being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made" The distinction between "created," and "begotten," is not only a proper one, but it is one of infinite *significance.* God could beget, but not create, "the Lord Jesus Christ." He could "make" *man,* and make him in the image of this God-man, but in no sense could he "make" the Lord Jesus Christ! Adam was made out of a substance which the fiat of the Almighty produced out of nothing. But no act of will or power could produce the person of the Mediator—of the nature of God, and indeed "very God." The Lord Jesus Christ was indeed

"begotten," not "created," and this infinitely distinguishes him from all other beings, and exalts him infinitely above all other beings, notwithstanding the fact, that the Father, in the act of begetting the Son, saw fit to ally his Divine nature to an order in the rank of creation lower than that of angels. Hence the significance of the terms so often used in the Scriptures—"the Son of God," "the only begotten Son of God," his "only," his "well-beloved Son." But the common view strips these terms, of deep and wondrous meaning, of all their beauty and appropriateness. The Lord Jesus Christ in his origin and humanity, was in no wise distinguished from or superior to that of any other man, created out of the dust of the earth, if the common view is the true view.

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins; who is the image of the invisible God, the *first born of every creature.*" Col. 1: 14, 15. The common interpretation given to this passage, and to similar ones in the New Testament, viz., that it simply indicates rank, or honor, I am not prepared to accept. The literal rendering seems more natural, and more in consonance with its connections. The apostle is setting forth the transcendent qualifications of the Redeemer; and rehearsing the mighty acts of his power in his office and character as the "one Mediator," and in so doing he declares him to be the very "image of the invisible God," born to the Headship of all creatures, inheriting it from the Father as his "birthright," so that even his humanity had *priority* in the kingdom of nature, even as his Divine nature had priority in the supernatural kingdom. The phrase, as applied to Christ, therefore, means far more than exalted *rank* among the children of men—the deference and right accorded to the "first-born" son under the Jewish economy. It means that Christ's human nature entered, as a component element, into the very structure of the Mediatorial system—was not an incident, an after accomplishment, a supplementary provision, but a radical feature of it; a reality, "from the beginning," before the work of creation and providence had begun to be administered, by virtue of the eternal purpose of the Father. If the phrase is held to indicate *rank*, exaltation, merely, we are met

with the fact that the human nature of Christ is greatly *inferior*, in itself, to the nature of angels. He passed by angels, in all their descending grades and allied himself to a race much below them in the scale of physical and intellectual being, that he might thereby teach to the universe, in all time, yea, and through all eternity, a great lesson in *humility*—a lesson which he was ever teaching his disciples, and, notably, at the last supper, when he girded on a towel and performed the office of a menial, in washing the feet of his disciples. And a further reason for assuming a nature, which in itself, was not capable of giving him exaltation or honor, but the contrary, among "the sons of God," was, doubtless, to demonstrate that "the excellency of the power" which he came to exercise in behalf of men, ruined by sin, was "of God," and not of any creature, not of any natural system, however honorable, or glorious, or stupendous, in might—it was all of *grace*, all of "the Spirit of God," which worketh in men "to will and to do of his own good pleasure."

There was nothing therefore in *human nature*—nothing in the entire system of nature, to confer any virtue, any honor, any power, any exaltation, on the person or office of the Redeemer. It did not, it could not dignify Him. But He dignified, honored, exalted, sublimated it. And in heaven, through all the ages of the everlasting kingdom, He will glorify it, in his own person, and, by reason of this alliance with it, put honor upon it, such as no other order or rank of intelligences will receive. In the *order* of creation Christ the Divine-man, the Type and Representative of the human race, was the *first* "begotten," the "only begotten of the Father." He began the work of honoring and exalting that inferior nature, when he began the work of creation, and the ordering of providence; and He continued to honor it in the administration of his mediatorship down to the incarnation. And when the work and end of His "humiliation" were accomplished, God exalted Him, his "only Begotten" still more, in the heavenly kingdom; and He will continue to exalt him, until "all things are put under him." And then will Christ surrender the kingdom, "without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing"—a kingdom of peace, and righteousness, and holiness, transcendently glorious, to "the Father, that he may be all in all."

The limits of the present work do not allow me to traverse one of the most interesting fields of sacred thought, and one which could not fail to yield abundant evidence in support of the views I have expressed. I refer to the numerous instances recorded in the Old Testament in which God, in person, or as "the angel of the Lord," appeared to men, and conversed with them, and "wrestled" with them, and made promises to them, and laid his commands upon them; beginning with Adam, on the day of his transgression, and coming down through all the patriarchal and Jewish history. Can any one doubt that this Divine and supernatural appearing, was the Divine-man, the "one Mediator," the incarnated God, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, the "Seed of the woman," the "only Begotten of the Father," already existing and reigning in heaven, and the hope, and refuge, and strength of the saints on earth? Sure I am, that if the reader will study the Old Testament record with this key in his mind, it will be almost like a new revelation to him, such new and glorious views of Christ will it yield him.

Now what is there in this hypothesis, to which an insuperable objection can be raised, save in one particular, which I shall hereafter note and briefly consider? It is in accord with the entire drift of the Divine record. It serves to explain and reconcile passages otherwise inexplicable and conflicting. It gives new meaning, new emphasis, new glory, to the doctrines of grace, and to the history of Redemption, as unfolded in the rise, progress, and final perfection of God's moral kingdom.

The one serious objection to this pre-existence theory,—an objection which doubtless has already occurred to the reader, and by the great mass of those who will deign to give it a moment's thought, will be counted *fatal* to it, may be thus stated: How is it possible that the human nature of Christ, if already numbered among the realities of existences, could undergo the changes necessary to harmonize the fact with the gospel narratives respecting the birth and growth to manhood of Jesus of Nazareth? or, in other words, how could a mature existence be born of a woman, and pass through the successive stages of infancy and childhood until it reached ripe man-

hood, under the natural laws of birth, and growth, and development, which history, sacred and profane, affirms to have been true in the case of Jesus? Is not the idea a gross absurdity? Is it not more preposterous even than the question which Nicodemus propounded to Christ, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" John 3: 4. Christ, please observe, does not directly answer this question; but he does assure the candid inquirer that there *are even greater marvels than this*, which so staggers him, in the kingdom which He came to set up among and over men. And in like manner, just here, without any presumption on my part, I assure the reader, and he will not deny it, if candid with his own judgment, that there are profounder mysteries and wonders than this would be, if true, in the supernatural system of revealed truth, to which he gives his assent without reserve or questioning.

I will here briefly state the chief points of my reply to this objection, and dismiss it.

1. "With God all things are possible." It is no insuperable objection to any theory propounded, or to any doctrine stated, or fact alleged, that *we cannot see how it can be true.* A thousand things *are* both true and belief in them rational, which our minds fail to comprehend, and of course our philosophy is not able to explain. We unhesitatingly accept as veritable truths, veritable realities, a thousand facts, a thousand doctrines, which no finite knowledge has ever ascertained to be true; which no ken of mortal vision has ever discovered, and of which no power of human reason can ever take cognizance. This is specially true in the realm of the spiritual, and the supernatural. Job expresses the idea in bold and striking language when he asks: "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea?" Job 11: 7–9.

The mysteries of *Revelation* itself, are *unrevealed* truths, simply declared facts or doctrines, quite above and beyond

human reason to comprehend or solve. There are depths in God's revelation to man, both in the system of nature and of the supernatural—in Providence as well as in the Bible—which no man or angel ever sounded—heights which no creature intellect ever scaled—fields, immensities of vision, which no finite being has as yet ever traversed, and will not be able fully to explore all through the ages of eternity. Why, there is not a doctrine peculiar to the Scriptures—for instance, the being of God, the trinity, the incarnation, the union of Deity with man in the person of Christ, the new birth, the methods of the Spirit in conversion and sanctification, Divine and human agency co-operating in man—the union and reciprocal action of matter and spirit in our own person—that we understand, or can understand. We have to take them mainly on *faith*, if we take them at all. They are not *discoverable* by the light of nature, or the powers of reason. Our philosophy breaks down in any and every attempt to grasp them. They are *mysteries* still, under all the light of Divine revelation, in the Word, in nature and in providence. They are *declared* to be such, and will remain such forever, at least while we remain in the present imperfect state of being.

In the ways of Divine *Providence*, if anywhere, we might expect a solution of some of these perplexing problems; light evolved, by the help of which we might, by study and striving, attain to a rational explanation, or at least to a partial understanding of the mysteries of the Word, and the mysteries of nature. But even Providence is an incomprehensible book to us. Every page of it is crowded with mysteries. We walk here, at times, in absolute *darkness*. We are pushed to the wall. We are ready to follow the advice given to Job, to "Curse God and die." We take up the refrain of Cowper—oh! how many aching, desolated, agonized broken hearts,—how many clouded, and bewildered, and despairing minds, have repeated with weeping his words over the ways of Providence?—

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

It is the unexpected that is ever coming to pass. The very things which we say to ourselves can never happen are the very things which are continually occurring, both in our own experience, and under the eye of observation, in the life around us. While events, results which we count upon as certainties in the future, are never realized. From behind a "*frowning* providence," light must come to our relief, if it ever come. From "deep, unfathomable mines," the treasure of blessed thought, and rich experience of grace and consolation, and reward for years of patient waiting, and wasting toil, must be dug out, and by a higher wisdom and a stronger hand than our own, or we can never possess it. And this is true of the best of men, of the most experienced Christian, of the most reverent and exalted minds. The deepest thinkers have often been in deeps in which they saw no light. "The whole hemisphere of contemplation," says John Foster, "appears inexpressibly strange and mysterious. It is cloud pursuing cloud, forest after forest, and Alps upon Alps."

In the nature of things this has to be so. It is not an arbitrary arrangement of the Almighty. The God of all wisdom has chosen this method of government for wise and blessed ends. He will compel *trust*, *faith*, in Him, as a prerequisite of the blessing. And a system of *sight*, of absolute certainty, would never produce this result. He governs in a way to abase pride, and vain glory, and rebuke self-sufficiency in the creature: in a way that exalts the supernatural above nature, and makes God himself the main Factor in all human plans and achievements—the real, all-controlling Force in human history.

I repeat, therefore, my proposition, that, because *we cannot see*, with our finite vision, and imperfect knowledge, *how this thing can be;* cannot comprehend the rationale of it—we are not warranted, for this reason, on this ground, to reject the hypothesis in question.

2. The *birth of Jesus was a miraculous birth.* I mean of course the antecedents, the transaction as a whole. The human nature of Jesus was not the product of the natural laws of generation. He had no earthly father, as has every other man

ever born into the world, for Joseph was such by "repute" only, although the husband of Mary. He was "conceived in the womb of the virgin" of Galilee, by "the Holy Ghost;" and hence was, in this sense, and for this reason, "the only begotten Son of God," although not in the sense in which that term is used in the Scriptures. Here again is a mystery, too profound for us to solve; too sacred for us to discuss. *How could it be?* we instinctively ask. We must, we do accept the *fact*, on the sole testimony of revelation, unless we class ourselves with unbelievers. And being *miraculous* in character, its probability is not to be judged on natural principles. Reason may accept it as rationally probable, even while we cannot see philosophically how it can be.

Hence the common theory—if one there really be—has no advantage on this score, over the pre-existent hypothesis. A miracle is always a miracle. One miracle is not more difficult of performance than another. There are no *grades* in miracles. It is as easy for God to "create all things out of nothing," as it is to cause a blade of grass to grow, or the flower to bloom. One miracle, therefore, is not more *improbable*, in itself, than another; nor is faith or belief in its actuality, any more unreasonable. The moment you admit the *miraculous*, in any event or transaction, you take it wholly out of the sphere of nature, and the operation of nature's laws, and resolve it into the will and power of the unseen and almighty God. The entire system of the supernatural rests on a much broader and surer basis than man's natural reason, viz., on faith in the wisdom, and power, and word of the unseen and Infinite One.

It was, therefore, just as easy, just as rational and possible, for the Divine-man to subject his living existence, body and soul, to the circumstances and conditions of his earthly state and experience: in the sight of men and angels, to be born of a woman, to lie as an infant in the manger at Bethlehem, and to "increase in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man" to manhood, as do other men; as for him to be begotten without father; to be conceived by the mysterious and miraculous agency of the Holy Ghost; and to pass from infancy to maturity under the ordinary laws of growth and development. *We admit its miraculous* character, on any

theory that can be suggested; and when we have admitted *that*, with all that it carries with it, we claim as good a foundation, in reason, in probability, in Scripture, for the hypothesis we have ventured to suggest, as there is for the views which have generally prevailed (if any body knows what they are) among commentators, divines, and theological writers.

I do not claim extensive acquaintance with theological literature, especially that of the past; but so far as my knowledge goes, no writer or preacher, with one exception, has held the views which I have here presented. That solitary exception is Dr. Isaac Watts, so widely and favorably known in the Christian world by his sacred lyrical writings.* He however held only to the pre-existence of the human *soul* of Christ, not of his body. As I have not access to his works, but derive my knowledge of his views through Prest. Edwards' criticisms upon them, I cannot state the grounds of such a singular discrimination, nor know his reasons for adopting even this limited view of Christ's pre-existent human nature. It seems strange, in the highest degree, that he should have separated the soul from the body, and clothed it with regal attributes and functions, thousands of years before the body of Christ existed. He held that the pre-existent soul of Christ created the world, and governed mankind, at least the Jewish nation, before his incarnation. His ideas however seem crude, and, in some respects, are obviously contrary to scripture. For instance, in his scheme, the Son is not a distinct person from the Father. So far forth as he is a Divine person, and acts in the sphere of creation and providence, he and the Father are the same. He seems to have had no intelligent idea of the two distinct natures—the Divine and the human—in the person of Christ, constituting jointly the one Mediator, the God-man, between God and his creatures.

Prest. Edwards notices this scheme in his "Miscellaneous

* Dr. Watts is chiefly known by his lyrical writings, which long since became classics in the hymnology of the Church. He was however a prose writer as well, and one of considerable note and ability; the author of several volumes of sermons, and numerous theological treatises, the best known of which was on the Trinity. His 'Logic, or the Right Use of Reason," and his "Improvement of the Mind," evince no mean mental power.

Observations," and offers some just and forcible criticisms upon it. So far as his objections apply to Dr. Watts' confounding the Son with the Father, and to the limitation of his government to the Jewish nation, they are unanswerable. But not so when he reasons against the whole pre-existent theory. The substance of his objections, so far as they relate to the last point, may be reduced to two propositions, as follows: 1. According to this scheme "the man Christ Jesus was not properly the son of a virgin." 2. The exaltation of Christ, after his ascension, is declared in the Scriptures to be in reward for his obedience and suffering, and was consequent on the trial of his mortal virtue in the days of his flesh.*

I fail to see the pertinency or force of the first objection. For we must bear in mind the *miraculous* character of that conception. We cannot define its nature, extent, conditions, or anything pertaining to it. All we know is, that, by some mysterious and supernatural agency of the Holy Ghost, "the holy child Jesus" was born of a virgin, and became the reputed son of Joseph. His life, from earliest childhood to its close, abundantly testifies that he was essentially *unlike* any other child of Adam ever born of woman. Such a Childhood, to say nothing of his after years, viewed either in its physical, moral, or intellectual aspects, was never seen among men, before, nor since. And this proves that he received no moral taint by reason of his maternal descent. He was *sinless*, in childhood, and in manhood, absolutely sinless. The chain of cause and effect was broken, and for the first and only time in the history of the race, an "evil tree brought forth good fruit." This fact cannot be explained on either physiological or theological grounds, on the received theory. "The child" was "holy" from the womb,—not by *regeneration*,—for that is inadmissible—that necessitates the conclusion that he was "conceived in sin, and brought forth in iniquity," like all other men, and needed himself moral cleansing, and from that we revolt. He was "holy" because he owed nothing to man but the accident of *birth* and natural *relationship*. He was of God, "begotten" by Him before Adam was made. The *origin* of his humanity was as exceptional and extraordinary as his

* Edwards' Works, Vol. VII., pp. 354-359.

life and character. He stands out to view *alone*, separate from the entire race whose nature he assumed, the ONE DIVINE-MAN.

His mental development, and the extent and character of his knowledge, when at the age of twelve—a mere boy, a poor boy from an obscure village in Galilee, without education or culture, and having had no intercourse with society – he disputed with the doctors in the temple, "both hearing them and asking them questions," and "astonishing them at his understanding and answers"—this fact proves that he was as little indebted to his earthly parentage for his wonderful *intellectual* superiority, as for his transcendent moral virtue. He *inherited* nothing. Even his *name* was given him by the Father.

Whence this most wonderful Childhood of Jesus? *Whence* this maturity of moral character, this intellectual superiority, this breadth and comprehensiveness of views, this divine, super-human wisdom, which characterized and distinguished him from his very childhood, lifting him amazingly above any and every other person in history, and outshining the combined wisdom of the ages—*whence* came it? "whence hath this man this knowledge, having never learned?" is a pertinent, a profound question. The most rational solution of it, in my judgment, is found in the fact of his *pre-existence*. That exceptional, angelic childhood; that maturity and ripeness of moral character; that infinite sweep of knowledge, that absolute mastery of all the problems of being, and of divine government, was his by Divine "birthright," not by human inheritance; was "begotten" in him of the Father before creation was—even as Adam was created in the maturity of his powers and in the fullness of knowledge—as well as by growth and development, through the intervening ages, until his appearance on this earthly scene.

That he was verily *human*, nevertheless is beyond question: the son of Mary of Galilee, by birth.

So far we are on *historical* ground. And it is equally certain, that, in moral nature, in mental and spiritual growth and power, in wisdom and goodness, as well as in his intimate relations to, and intercourse with, and power over the supernatural system, He was essentially *unlike* all other men ever

born in the likeness of man. So incomparably superior to them in all respects, so resplendent in his personal character and attributes, as to distinguish him from all the rest of mankind, and advance him to a rank in which he eclipses even angels, and make him fit for the highest throne of creature greatness. "Jesus of Nazareth," though he came forth from the womb of an obscure virgin, stands forth to-day before the world, before angels, as the wonder of history, as the greatest miracle of the ages, even GOD MANIFEST IN THE FLESH.

True, Mary was the chosen *instrument* in giving birth to this character, on the theatre of man's redemption, and thereby establishing him in immediate relationship with those whom he came to seek and to save. But she was *only* the instrument. She did nothing to taint, or to mould the divinely-begotten one. He was not indebted to his mother, after the flesh, for one trait of character, for one step of advancement, for one ray of the glory ineffable which he shed down upon a benighted world, and a sin-cursed and degraded race.

Besides, it must be borne in mind that the *soul* is the real man; the body is only the shell, the servant, the instrument. What the soul is, the man is, in character, in rank, in achievement, in moral worth. And the *soul* of Jesus had no connection with Mary. She had very little to do with the *physical* being of the son she begat: she had nothing whatever to do in respect to the *soul*, which God gave to his "only begotten" So far as that was involved, there is no more difficulty with the hypothesis I suggest, than with the common view.—This first objection of the great theologian—whom I venerate as I venerate no other human authority—fails therefore to shake my own mature convictions, after many years of reflection and study of the subject.

2. There is more force, I readily admit, in Pres. Edwards' second objection. The Scriptures do refer, in many and various connections, to Christ's wonderful exaltation subsequent to his humiliation and in a way to connect it with his sufferings and death as the ground of the reward. And if so how could he receive the reward, in any proper sense, before his incarnation and death on the cross?

To this I reply, First, that Edwards himself, in common with all Christian writers on this subject, does admit the exalted state of Christ *anterior* to his birth, during the four thousand years of history under the Patriarchal and Mosaic economies, and even before the creation and fall of man. He cites a great number of passages, and argues from them with remarkable aptness and cogency, to prove that Christ in his "*human nature*," created angels, created, and governed, and upheld all things. He reasons at length to show that Christ judged the rebellious angels at the time of their revolt against authority, and at the same time rewarded the obedient sons of God by confirming them in obedience, so that thereafter they would be free from the possibility of falling. Now it is difficult to conceive what *greater* honor the Father could confer upon his "well beloved Son," than this. Nothing that Christ has done subsequent to his incarnation; nothing that the Scriptures indicate that he will yet do in the future of our world, or in the winding up of its affairs in the judgment day, can or will, seemingly, eclipse the honor, the exaltation, which shines out in these transactions. Was this for obedience not yet personally rendered by him, or was it simply because of the eternal purpose of God and "the covenant of grace" made with the Son? Pres. Edwards' admissions, and arguments, destroy, it seems to me, almost entirely the force of the objection we are considering.

But again. As there is no succession of ideas or events in the Divine Mind—He being "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever," "a thousand years being as one day, and one day as a thousand years"—the future as well as the past eternity, being absolutely present with him—Christ's obedient life in the flesh even unto death, was all known to him from the beginning, was contemplated by him as an accomplished reality, just the same *before* as *after* he hung upon the accursed tree; at the time he entered into covenant with him, and at all times during his administration of the heavenly kingdom. It was necessary, for the *creature's* sake, to "show forth his death," as the Scriptures phrase it; but the wondrous event, the obedience, the humiliation, had no enhanced certainty, or virtue, or influence on the Divine Mind, when they

became matters of veritable earthly history, than before. Besides, it is admitted, inconsistently as it seems to me, even claimed, by all writers on the subject, that during the four thousand years of the Church's existence prior to the Christian Era, Christ did administer the whole system of Redeeming agency, based on his personal righteousness, and atoning sacrifice, not yet made, through types, and ordinances, and delegated rule. All this was in *anticipation* of his actual incarnated life and death in the flesh. Adam, Moses, Abraham, Job, Enoch, and a host of other Old Testament believers, saw "Christ from afar," knew that their "Redeemer lived," and that at some future period they should see him with their eyes, as he was then revealed to them by faith. Christ to *them* was a suffering, crucified, risen and exalted Saviour, as really as he was in the apostolic age, after the story of the cross had passed into history; as really as he is to *us*, after eighteen hundred years have passed away, and the very site of the crucifixion cannot be determined.*

Now if all this experience was possible, nay, was an accomplished reality, *anticipatory* of transactions yet in the womb of the future, why may we not carry back the process a little farther, and apply the same principle of reasoning to the heavenly kingdom anterior to the humiliation? Surely there is nothing rash, or unreasonable, or unscriptural, in so doing. Nay, it seems to me to be just the reverse; to be demanded by the exigencies of the case; to be the only warrant for what is believed and asserted in relation to the Jewish

*Calvary is a little hill outside the gate of Jerusalem, and so insignificant in itself, that its precise locality has never been determined. And yet Calvary, by reason of the Cross, is the real *Centre* and attraction of the universe. It will not only gather glory as the ages roll on, but gather fresh lustre in Heaven, as the system of Redemption is unfolded, and the empire it won is extended. And so the literal cross was but two pieces of common wood, roughly put together, yet it "lifted up" Him who is to "draw all men unto Him." On it was crucified the Saviour of the world, the Mediator of the universe! That cross has concentrated and declared the "wisdom of God and the power of God," to accomplish the stupendous and eternal purpose of Divine Mercy. It has consecrated all suffering in a holy cause. It has become the recognized symbol of all moral power, and moral victory.

church; the only rational solution of the Mediatorial problem, in its man-ward aspects.

Once more. It is reasonable to suppose, and the Scriptures strongly support the supposition, that the exaltation and reward of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, at least so far as it will be matter of Divine manifestation to intelligences in the heavenly state, will be *greatly increased* by a *completed* Redemption, a completed moral kingdom, perfected and given up to the Father, to "the praise of the glory of his grace" who planned it all. This will undoubtedly be true in the experience of *angels*. They were rewarded for their fidelity with crowns of glory, and exalted ministries, before they greeted Adam in the garden of Eden. They were still further rewarded, as Pres. Edwards teaches, on the ascension of Christ into heaven after his resurrection, as a reward for their faithful services to him in his state of humiliation. And they will no doubt receive still greater honors, in the judgment day, when Christ will present his Church to the Father, in the fullness of its moral beauty and glory, in reward for their abundant ministries of succor and consolation, and help in its behalf, during all the ages of her conflict and suffering. What fresh crowns will be put upon each and all of them then! Faithful to the last—faithful in the most trying times—faithful when apostate angels fell—faithful when Adam and all his posterity in him, sinned and cast off allegiance—faithful when the author of Redemption himself was lifted up on a Roman cross and put to death—faithful during long and awful apostasies in the Church of the living God—faithful when millions of those to whom "they were ministering spirits," denied the Lord who bought them, even as Peter did, and as Judas did, betraying their "Master with a kiss"—what dignities, what "powers, in heavenly places," will be conferred upon them! And so will it be, in measure, with every human disciple of the great Jesus, who is "faithful unto death."

And why should it not be true of *Christ* himself? I would not lay too much stress on the doctrine of *reward* in its application to the Redeemer. The whole aspect of his Redemption work, is the farthest possible remove from any and everything of a *commercial* character. True it is, that, speaking after the

manner of men, Christ also had respect unto "the recompense of the reward." It was "for the joy that was set before him, that he endured the cross, despising the shame." But we must bear in mind that this is the *lowest* view we can take of the Son of God, in relation to these transactions. There are other and diviner aspects of the case, which afford infinitely higher and more glorious views of his character, and of the inner nature of things. The one motive which overtopped all others, which outweighed, and outmeasured all personal considerations—was THE GLORY OF GOD, whose "brightness" he was—the glory of that MORAL KINGDOM which he was appointed to set up and complete, and which is to dominate the universe of God in its eternal state.

CHAPTER X.

REDEMPTION THE CHIEF OF ALL GOD'S WORKS.

The magnitude and grandeur of the material universe, is a subject that may well interest and move a devout mind. It was thus with the pious Psalmist. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun; which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof." Ps. 19: 1–6. And again he breaks forth, when he contrasts man with this stupendous array in the heavens: "O Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens. . . . When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained; what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him? . . . O Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" Ps. 8: 1, 3, 4, 9. How much grander would have been the Psalmist's conceptions of nature, had his knowledge of astronomy been equal to that of a Newton or a Herschel!

So it was with other saints of the olden time. That wondrous man who dwelt in "the land of Uz" was evidently a devout astronomer. Many of his conceptions, and descriptions, are exceedingly bold and grand, and indicate a thorough understanding of astronomy, according to the light of his day. "Which removeth the mountains and they know not; which

overturneth them in his anger; which shaketh the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble; which commandeth the sun and it riseth not, and sealeth up the stars; which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea: which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the South; which doeth great things, past finding out; yea and wonders without number." Job 9: 5–10. "Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion? Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season? or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons?" Chap. 38: 31, 32. And what a description of God in nature have we in the 26th chapter! "Hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering. He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing. He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds, and the cloud is not rent under them. He holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it. He hath compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end. The pillars of heaven tremble, and are astonished at his reproof. He divideth the sea with his power, and by his understanding he smiteth through the proud. By his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand formed the crooked serpent. Lo, these are parts of his ways; but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?" The immense system of nature, with all its displays, and laws, and action, was only God, the Eternal Spirit, the moral lawgiver to man, and the final judge of men's character, and the arbiter of destiny.

So it was with David, and with all devout students of the manifold works of creation. These material things, to their eyes, were but manifestations of the unseen Creator. The immensity of his works filled their minds with wonder and awe. Their stability and order assured their faith. Their perfection and splendor gave them exalted conceptions of the moral attributes of God. They looked beyond nature, beyond matter, organisms, natural laws, and the planetary and stellar systems of worlds, rolling through infinite space, and held firmly in their respective orbits by some unseen power, to the First Great Cause of all things—to the Power above nature, and in-

dependent of nature, and yet pervading all nature, controlling, energizing, and subordinating it all to moral uses — a Power sitting on "the circle of the heavens," and swaying his majestic sceptre over all systems; now speaking in "the music of the spheres," and anon in "the thunder of his power;" now in the terrible displays which shook Sinai to its base and terrified the people, and again in a voice of infinite tenderness and love from Calvary.

If the visible works of God produced such an effect on the minds and hearts of the devout in ancient times, how much *more* should they do it in this day of advanced science! Contrast the knowledge of Job, Moses, David, and Abraham, with that of the modern astronomer. Since the establishment of the Copernican doctrine, and the discoveries of Galileo, Newton, Kepler, Laplace, Lagrange, the Herschels, and others in the same field, what new and wonderful light from this source has been shed on the human mind! The revelations of the modern telescope, in the hands of the great masters of science, are absolutely bewildering and overpowering—so vast, so grand, so varied, so illimitable, is the field of vision it opens up to our view; and the whole expanse seems to be crowded with material existences, in every conceivable form, and dimension, and condition of perfectness. And the greatest marvel of all is—that which most deeply affects the mind of the beholder, as he looks through these powerful lenses, is, not what he actually *sees* by the aid of them, but their *suggestive* power. He knows that he has but to increase their magnifying power in order to extend the circuit of his vision *ad infinitum!* to see still beyond the utmost horizon of present discovery other and still vaster peopled fields of space! He already sees stars at so infinite a remove from the earth, that a ray of light, though traveling at a speed of 200,000 miles in a second, will be millions of years in reaching us! And yet the work of discovery, seemingly, has but fairly begun. Untold myriads of vaster suns and systems than any yet seen in telescopic vision, lie beyond, and will yet, in all probability, be made to contribute their glory to swell the triumphs of modern science.

Yet, truly wonderful, awe-inspiring, and sublime as the system of nature is; in its immensity, in its variety and perfec-

tion, and in the force and effectiveness of its laws—the whole system instinct with the power, and glory, and wisdom of Him who spake it all into being, and "who commanded and it stood fast,"—yet is it eclipsed by the greater wonders and greater glories of the Redemptive system. The system of Nature, vast, wonderful, and stupendous as it confessedly is, and worthy of study and contemplation, and challenging, as it does, our admiration and praise,—is still *subordinate*, in the Divine plan, to the Supernatural. It is but a *means* to a higher end—the scaffolding to the Temple which God is building in his moral kingdom to the praise of his grace—stars which shine not with their own light but only reflect the rays of "the Sun of Righteousness," set in the central firmament of the heavenly powers.

And the same is true of the system of *Providence*, which embraces both the natural and the supernatural. The physical universe does not exist for *itself;* its end is not in itself. It is not for any good it is capable of accomplishing by means of its own inherent power. It is only as it stands related to the system of the supernatural in the kingdom of Redemption and Providence, that it has any value or use. There is no *power* in mere nature, in extension, immensity, physical laws and phenomena. All *power*, all moulding force, is in *mind*, in the Creative Intellect, which projects, upholds, subordinates, and uses nature to wise and beneficent ends. To divorce nature from grace, therefore, as is so commonly done in our time; or to make the whole supernatural system *subordinate*, of no account, not worthy the attention or study of the lofty-minded philosopher and student of nature, is simply monstrous stupidity, as well as senseless infidelity. It betrays a narrow, bigoted, self-conceited nature, far more than it indicates real breadth of view, true independence of thought, or genuine elevation of mind. The godless philosophy of the day is really a stultifying power on the human mind, and is spawning forth men of but one idea, intellectual pigmies, as well as moral monstrosities.

"To separate nature and providence from the mediation of Christ, is to put asunder what God has united. What is nature but the original constitution of all things? And what is

the original constitution of all things, but the state in which they were created *by* Christ, and *for* Christ? And this is mediation. What is providence? Is it not Christ upholding all things and governing all things? Is it not all things consisting and holding together in Christ? Providence, then, alienated from the mediatorial administration of Christ, is not the providence of the scriptures. And nature, separated from the work of Christ, is not the 'course of nature' mentioned in the scripture as a theatre for the scenes of redemption; and as an apparatus of means for the good of them that love God.*" The first, the chief, the grandest object in all the universe of being, amid the countless myriads of stars and systems studding immensity of space, as seen by the eye of faith, through the glass of inspired truth, is "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." And not only is this discovery the grandest and fullest which has been made to man on *earth*, but it is the grandest and fullest vouchsafed to angels and saints in the kingdom of *heaven*. For, through an "opened door in heaven," the apostle John, from the island of Patmos, was permitted to turn the glass of "Revelation," and the one vision which met and filled his eye was the vision of this same Lamb of God, as "if he had been slain," in the midst of the Throne, in the centre of all power and government, breaking the seals of the Book; angels worshiping him, the four and twenty elders bowing down to him, and one song of praise giving joyful expression to the sentiments of all in heaven.

The Psalmist embodies the true doctrine in few words, but words of wondrous significance: "Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name." Ps. 138: 2. "Word," as here used, undoubtedly refers to the supernatural system, in distinction from the system of nature; the Word, the Logos, revealed in the inspired Scriptures, and incarnated in the person of Jesus Christ; the Word of Divine promise and grace in the gospel; the blessed Word of salvation from sin and hell, announced to Adam in the garden, and confirmed and enlarged in the experience of ages of patriarchal piety; the Word of atonement as the basis of all the Divine purposes, and

* Jenkyn on the Atonement, p. 155.

works, and providential manifestations. The Word, emanating direct from the very *heart* of the Godhead, originating in the secret counsels of eternity, while as yet there was no system of nature, and declared to the world, from time to time, as man could receive it, by "holy men, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," and in the fullness of the dispensations was to be declared by the incarnate Word Himself, who should seal his testimony with his blood shed upon the cross in expiation of human guilt—this Divine, this holy, this supernatural and consecrated Word, the Psalmist declares, "God has magnified above all his name."

"Name," in this connection undoubtedly represents the system of Nature, and the system of Providence so far as it pertains to the natural system. Nature, as we have seen, declares that "Name" in all her multiform works. It is written on sun, moon, and stars. It is pronounced by every thing that lives and moves and has being. It can be spelled out in every law which governs the physical universe. It is gently murmured in the cadences of running water, and heard in the song of the bird, and is written all over in the blooming flower. It is wafted to us on the balmy breeze, and is heard in the ceaseless roar of the ocean. It comes forth in fresh power and beauty when the winter is past, and spring decks the earth in vernal bloom. Why, the countless suns that shine in infinite space are but the illuminators of that "Name." He, and he alone, "telleth the number of the stars; He calleth them all by their names." Ps. 147: 4. There is much that is sublime, much that is adorable, much that is attractive, and subduing, and inspiring; ah! yes, and not a little that is *awful*, and *terrifying*, in that Name, as the "heavens declare" it, and the earth echoes it back in the lightnings and thunders of his providential power. But grand, awful, and glorious as this Name is made to appear in Nature, it does not equal the Word of the Supernatural kingdom, revealing speaking, acting, uniting, transforming, perfecting, converting, dying, rising, glorifying!

ELIJAH AS A REFORMER.

This great truth in one of its practical aspects, is strikingly illustrated in the experience of this prophet of the Lord at a

memorable crisis in his public life. In some respects no prophet of the old dispensation was so honored of God: none wielded such power over nature. His mission was pre-eminently a mission of reform. God raised him up for the express purpose of drawing his people away from their idolatry, and clothed him with extraordinary functions for this purpose. King and people had totally apostatized, and Baal and the gods of the grove were supreme. But the Tishbite suddenly appears on the scene. And what a prophet! What a reformer! The first words he utters is a direful denunciation against Ahab, and a solemn oath, "As the Lord God of Israel liveth before whom I stand there shall not be dew or rain these years but according to my word." And for three and a half years the land of Israel was cursed with famine. Then he assembles the 850 priests of idolatry before Carmel to test, in the presence of Ahab and all the people, the question as to who is the true God; and when it is decided in favor of Jehovah by fire from heaven consuming the prepared sacrifice, he causes all these juggling priests to be put to death! according to the law in Deut. 13:5. Elijah prays again and the heavens give abundant rain, and the land rejoices.

Surely nothing can stand before such a reformer! A man who wields such power over the elements; a prophet who uses the fire and the sword of "the Lord God of Israel" against his enemies, must prevail. The king seems won. The people are astonished. Here is the man who shut heaven, and opened it by his "word." And they can never forget the scene at Carmel; the sacred fire descending and consuming the sacrifice, and the discomfiture and overthrow of all the priests in whom they had trusted. But Elijah's expectations were not realized. Sin was never put down and true reforms achieved, thus, and never will be. The heart of Jezebel was only enraged, and the prophet dreading her wrath, abandons his post of duty, throws up his mission, and flees into the wilderness. He "came and sat down under a juniper-tree" and prayed God to take "away his life!" And this was the prophet whose prayer had raised the dead, had shut and opened Heaven, who had dared to tax Ahab to his face with being Israel's troubler, who had just confronted the 850 priests of idolatry

and signally triumphed over them; now terrified by a message from a vile woman, and longing for death! But God had compassion on him and sent an angel to "touch" and feed him; and "in the strength of that meat he went forty days and forty nights, unto Horeb, the mount of God." And there "the word of the Lord came unto him, and said, What doest thou here Elijah?"

Elijah had made a grave mistake, although not willfully—a mistake which reformers, and prophets, and preachers of religion have repeated a thousand times, and are repeating in our time, in a great variety of ways, to the serious injury of Christ's cause. And yet they are as unconscious of the mistake and wrong as Elijah was when God came to remonstrate with him, and to open his eyes. His great mistake was in a *false reliance;* he looked for the reformation, the redemption of Israel, from the side of *nature.* He counted on the overthrow of idolatry and the enthronement of virtue in the heart and life of the nation, by great visible demonstrations—by years of terrible famine—by the slaying of the whole force of priests—by fire from heaven in answer to his call. But instead of this, behold a defiant message from Jezebel: "So let the gods do to me and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to-morrow about this time." And he lost heart at once. The measures he had used had failed. A terrible famine had not reclaimed the nation. The signal answers, in fire and in rain, to his prayers, availed nothing. With all its priests slain Idolatry still lifted up its head in the land, and the high-priestess of it was ready to put him to death and wipe out the reformation which he had inaugurated amidst visible demonstrations so awful, and so impressive!

But God has come down now before Horeb to teach his prophet his *true* reliance, and, inspiring his soul with calm, yet majestic trust in the power of *spiritual* manifestations and influences, to send him back to complete his great mission. Accordingly, we find the means the Lord uses exactly adapted to the prophet's state of mind at the present juncture, and to the divine purpose respecting his mission.

It was not chance which had guided the prophet during so many days and nights through a lonely wilderness to "the

mount of God." The scene was well chosen. It was historic. It was the most solemn and awful spot on earth. That mount had quaked, and burned, and been wrapped in darkness once before. There in the early history of his people God had come down and spoken to his servant Moses face to face, and communicated with Israel in the plain below. Here the law of the Ten Commandments had been given. That dispensation had proved, seemingly, a failure. The very people to whom it was made had gone over to the worship of idols, and the last prophet of the true God had fled the nation to save his life. The cause for which he had risked everything seemed utterly lost. And now on this same mount God had descended again to hold converse with man, and to warn his prophet against trusting in "chariots and horsemen," in kings and queens, in miraculous gifts, and wondrous demonstrations of power in the great work to which he had been called, and to teach him a more excellent way.

Elijah dwelt in a "cave" on the side of Horeb. Standing at its "entrance in," the eye swept a vast expanse of rocks and mountains—nature in every form of wild grandeur and awe-inspiring majesty. God spake to him there and said, "What doest thou here Elijah? . . Go forth and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And behold the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountain and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire." Here were demonstrations of nature far surpassing anything witnessed before Carmel at the slaying of the priests of idolatry. Here was "wind," "earthquake," and "fire," the three most powerful and terrible elements in nature. And what tumult and havoc they wrought, with mountains, and rocks, and everything, before the prophet's eye! Horeb itself quaked and was "rent." Before the "great and strong wind" the very rocks were broken in pieces, while a sea of fire rolled and surged over the whole world of vision.

The prophet, from his "stand on the mount," took it all in. He beheld these convulsions of nature, these wild commotions of the elements, these impressive exhibitions of almighty

power. But mark!—what subduing effect had they all on his mind? He had fled the face of man, and abandoned the cause of the God of Israel, in his conflict with the powers of idolatry, because Jezebel and the people had not been subdued and converted by the dispensation of Carmel. And yet with the far more impressive demonstrations of Horeb passing before him on that lonely mountain-top, he stands silent, moody, rebellious still, ready to justify his course. Nature's dispensations were again a failure, as they always were, and always will be, without the aid of the spirit and grace of God.

Had the Lord in righteous anger left his prophet to himself at this point, as he often leaves men after using upon them the best and strongest outward means of conversion, Elijah had never repented; never returned to take up the mission he had so ignominiously abandoned; never been God's instrument in effecting Israel's reformation; never cast his wondrous "mantle" on Elisha, his successor; never been carried up into heaven in a chariot of fire.

Mark the fact, for there is significance in it—a sermon of the utmost practical moment: — we are expressly told that God was not in any of these awful demonstrations of nature. The fact is *thrice* stated to emphasize it. He was not in the "wind," he was not in the "fire;" he was not in the "earthquake."

But now in infinite condescension and mercy the Lord touches the prophet's heart by a very dissimilar manifestation —by an agency that was born of the *Spirit*, and was, seemingly, wafted down gently on angel wings right out of the sky over him. "And after the fire a *still small voice!*" We are not *told* that *God* was in that "still small voice" We have no *need* to be told it The *effect* demonstrated that fact. And what a *contrast!* When that "still voice" broke on ears stunned with the power of earthquakes, and rending mountains, and breaking rocks, and fiery conflagrations, it must indeed, by contrast, have been like the very music of Paradise stealing over him; like the voice of the Spirit speaking out of the depths of eternal Peace, and in accents of Divine tenderness and mercy.

He could not stand before that still holy voice! There was a power in it that pierced straight through all his pride,

and stubbornness, and self-justifying spirit and went down to the very core of his heart! He had stood unmoved, sullen, while God passed before him in the whirlwind, and the earthquake, and the consuming fire; but he relents, trembles, is awe-stricken, when that still voice—the voice of the Spirit from heaven speaking to the spirit within, falls upon his ear. "And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out and stood in the entering in of the cave." 1 Kings, Chaps XVIII, XIX. The work was done. What nature had signally failed to do, even by her most stupendous forces, the Spirit of God accomplished by "a still small voice."

This great lesson—the superiority of the supernatural, even in its humblest forms and forces, to nature, even in her grandest displays and mightiest forces, in our efforts to reform and save men, whether individually or in masses—is meant *for all time*, and has an immensely wider application to the teachers of religion in this nineteenth century, and to all who seek to win souls to Christ, than it had in the time of Elijah the Tishbite, or ever had before in the history of the conflict of the supernatural religion of the Bible with the system of nature, and the Kingdom of Evil.

God, often, in these days, as he has ever done, passes before his people in providential acts of terrible righteousness: in "the great strong wind" of excitements, commotions, and revolutions in the existing order of things: in "earthquakes" of judgments, rending society, engulfing hopes, institutions, and strong towers of defence: and in "fire," which sweeps down the marble and granite structures of earthly wisdom, fortune, and power, and reduces to ashes the loftiest hopes of the idolatrous heart, and a nation's pride and vain glory. But alas! when his people look for the expected effects, in penitent and humble hearts, in a reformed national sentiment and life, —they are disappointed; and are often ready to play, and do indeed, play the part of Elijah over again. When the results looked for and desired by the preaching of the Word, by prayer and faith, and the faithful use of the established means, are not attained to, they turn to nature! to visible demonstra-

tions; to measures of a higher pressure; to tinkering the church's machinery and augmenting its power; to multiplying meetings and setting up liturgies, and getting up a ritualistic fever; and in devising sensational novelties and attractions of every sort in order to interest men in religion and convert them to Christ. But down through all these visible natural demonstrations, and false reliances, there comes a Voice as distinct and emphatic in its utterance as Elijah heard in Horeb, saying "*God* is not in the great and strong wind"—"*God* is not in the earthquake"—"*God* is not in the fire." Your faith in these things is vain. It is "not by might, nor by power" of natural and outward means, however wonderful they may be, that souls are converted to the Cross, that sin is cured, and real reformations are achieved in individual or national life, "but by my Spirit saith the Lord." "The still small voice" must speak, not from the mouth of nature—not out of the whirlwind, the earthquake and the fire of visible demonstrations—but from the very "mount of God"—out of the sacred Word of revelation which he ever "magnifies above all his name:" speak in the still hour of quiet reflection to the inward conscience, and in the way of the ordinary and divinely appointed methods of the Spirit.

I appeal to the experience and observation of the ages, both in respect to individual and to national life. How often is a chapter of God's sore visitations upon his ancient chosen people closed with these words: "And for all this they sinned still." The most startling manifestations of God's angry power ever made to man, have produced but faint and transient impressions. The most awful judgments of his hand—such as war, pestilence, famine, destructive shipwrecks, tornadoes, earthquakes, and conflagrations—seldom produce good moral results, especially on a scale we might reasonably calculate upon. The French nation was never so utterly given over to wickedness, on the part of all classes, as during "the reign of terror," when the nation was drenched in blood. And what a dark and awful picture of human wickedness has Josephus painted in connection with the siege of Jerusalem, under the Roman general Titus! It scarcely seems credible, that in such a day of national calamity and ruin, and of individual

suffering, unparalleled in the annals of the world, ungodliness and depravity in every conceivable form should abound unrestrained, and the city of God be made a very pandemonium. And so in the case of visitations upon individuals. Sickness, bereavements, disasters, failures in life, and even the shadow of death stealing upon them, seldom work reformation, a radical and permanent transformation. *Never* indeed, unless the *grace* of God, in some form or other, by some agency, seen or unseen, is superadded. God is in all these visitations, as a God of *power*, a God of "*righteousness*" to punish transgression, and to remind the world that there is still a God of justice in the heavens. But He is not necessarily there as a God of *discipline*, a God of *gracious* influences. The "still small voice" may not go before him. The power of the Spirit, to soften the rock, to subdue the passions, to abase pride, and break down obstinacy, and gently lead the soul up and forth into light and life, may be wanting.

So was it with Pharaoh, under a succession of the most terrible and widespread judgments that were ever visited upon the head of a man, or upon a people. But, instead of subduing his pride and stubbornness, he only waxed worse and worse, grew more and more defiant and resolute in his wickedness, until he at last, in his madness, rushed upon "the thick bosses of Jehovah's buckler," and miserably perished, he and his hosts, in the Red Sea.

But do we not read that "God hardened Pharaoh's heart?" Certainly, but how? Precisely as he may be said to harden *every* sinner's heart, who will not be reclaimed by means of chastisements. God did *not* harden Pharaoh's heart by exerting upon it any direct positive influence to induce resistance. Such a supposition would make him the author of sin, and array himself against his own purpose, and remedial agencies. The *only* sense in which he hardened him, was by withholding all *gracious influence*, which he was under no obligation to supply, leaving him to follow his own chosen ways; leaving the judgments which he sent upon him to have their natural effect upon such a heart, and so bent on his chosen wickedness, withholding all restraint, and interposing no moral influence whatsoever. And this is just the way God deals with

other sinners; and they perish with a great destruction because he gives them up to nature, and will not interpose with the supernatural.

INTEMPERANCE.

Whoever has carefully observed the efforts made during the last fifty years to reform men from the terrible evils of Intemperance, must have learned, ere this, how little reliance can be put upon any thing save the *converting grace of God*. If any fact has been made clear in the light of *experience*, and on a broad scale, extending through half a century or more, it is the fact that the *Christian* basis is the only basis on which we can stand and work effectively in achieving this much-needed reformation. There is no room, no foothold, for beneficent work, for radical reformation, outside of Christianity. Neither the individual, nor society, can be elevated, made virtuous, or released from the thraldom of sin, without it. In the face of all history, I challenge a denial of this fact. Let the apostles of reformation, let Positivists, Agnostics, and Rationalists, disprove it if they can.

The *statistics* in relation to the extent and effects of this evil*—in relation to pauperism, crime, the waste of money, the ruin of health, and destruction of body and soul, statistics admitted on all sides to be reliable—are sufficiently appalling, one might suppose, to damn a thousand vices, and rally the entire community to extirpate the system, root and branch. And yet the system lives, and flourishes, and is mighty in the land! The accursed traffic in the souls and bodies of men—a traffic which thrives by crowding our almshouses, and penitentiaries, and state prisons with inmates, and loading the people with taxes, and cursing families without number, is not only *tolerated*, but actually *protected* and *legalized* by legislation! Miles upon miles of grogshops, lining the streets of our chief

* Chief Justice Coleridge of England says that *four-fifths* of the crime that comes into court results from drink, for which Britishers pay over $500,000,000. And Mr. Gladstone said recently in the House of Commons: "We suffer more year by year and every year from intemperance than from war, pestilence and famine combined; those three great scourges of the human family."

cities, enticing and corrupting the young—demoralizing more and more the morally weak and enslaved—and this after fifty years of earnest and combined endeavor to put them down—is a sad commentary on the wisdom of our reformatory efforts. Such honest, strong, united, persistent effort to eradicate a great social evil, was never before made. And still we have scored little or no headway. No intelligent observer will deny that the evils of intemperance are not as manifold, as widespread, and, in the aggregate, as large and fearful at present as at any previous period in our nation's history. There are *more* drunkards in the land *to-day;* there are *more* children and youth being drawn into the fatal vortex; there is *more* money yearly expended for intoxicating drinks; and the amount of crime, and pauperism, and poverty produced by the sin of Intemperance, is *greater*, than ever before. It is a most melancholy and discouraging confession! But it is the *truth*, and we had better look it in the face, and ask, in all humility, and by prayer and weeping before God, for the *reason.*

Can it be that Christianity, after all, is a *failure?* Can it be that it holds no "small voice" that is able to subdue this terrible passion for strong drink in human nature? Can it be that there is no virtue, no power in an organized Christian Church to arrest and put down this tremendous destroyer of men's souls and bodies? No, this is not the reason. There *is* light enough, and moral power enough, in the church of Jesus Christ, if rightly used, to overthrow *any* system of admitted wrong. And this whole vile system, from the manufacturer of strong drink down to the consumer of it, is *reprobated.* The brand of "immorality" was stamped upon the traffic *fifty years* ago by the first State Temperance Convention ever held in this country, of which the writer happened to be a member. It is a system weighed down to hell by the tears, and agonies, and curses of myriads of widows and orphans, whom it has made such, and wronged infinitely. It is a system that is held responsible by public sentiment for more than three-fourths of all our crime, and pauperism, and for a large share of our public taxes. It is a system that has not one redeeming feature. "It is evil, and only evil and that continually," and on a scale that is truly appalling.

The Church of Christ not equal to grapple with and put down such a system of admitted and cursed depravity! If not, we had better disband our churches and cease our crusade against sin.

Why then is it not put down? The reason is not difficult to find. It is for the same reason that Elijah failed to reform Israel. He "trusted in chariots and horsemen." He relied on demonstrations of *power*, on the fire, and sword, and earthquake, and wind of visibilities, and not on the *Spirit* of the living Jehovah. So, to a great extent, the efforts made to reclaim men from intemperance, and to preserve the rising generation from its evil power, have been actually divorced from religion, from prayer, and reliance on God, and from the control of the church; and have consisted in pledges, in legislation, in self-restraints, in voluntary associations, and "secret societies," in getting up a favorable public sentiment, and in trying to restrain the traffic by legal enactments. The advocates of the cause have for the most part, urged it on false principles, by arguments drawn from a low plane, and have put the reformation on an insufficient transient basis. The *grace of God*, is, after all, our main reliance, in this, as in every other form of good. The principles, and motives, and influences drawn from the Gospel, are just as essential to permanent and grand results on *this* field of human endeavor as on any *other* Temperance is a part of our Religion, and no mean part of it—and yet, to a very great extent, it has been relegated to another sphere, treated as a question outside of the church and quite independent of it. Ministers, in great numbers, and churches, and individual Christians have felt at liberty to stand aloof from it entirely, or only countenance it in condescension, or give it only a partial, heartless support. And often then on principles, and by methods, which really do more harm than good to the cause. *When* every Christian minister, as in duty bound, shall lift up his voice in clear and earnest advocacy; and every individual Christian shall set a worthy example; and the church of Christ, as an organized moral Power for the salvation of the world, shall do her duty, in bearing witness and in puting in force her moral enginery, *then*, this evil—enormous as it is, and fortified as it is—will have to succumb and will be wiped

out from the land, as slavery, and other social evils, have been in the past.

THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL SYSTEM.

Our Sunday-school system has grown into colossal proportions. It has already become a power of great magnitude in our religious life and development. It is full of promise, and of grand results, if held true to its mission as an auxiliary aid. But it is susceptible of perversion, and once perverted from its true end, it is sure to become a vast enginery of mischief. And is there not a tendency already manifest to the eye of a keen observer, to make it a dominant power? to exalt it unduly in the sphere of work and expectation in relation to Christ's kingdom? to put it in the place of the ministry, and the church, which are God's own ordained and chief instrumentalities for saving men? to take the religious training of our children and youth out of the sphere of the family, and out of the sphere of pulpit and church teaching and moral guidance, and give it over to the exclusive and absolute control of this voluntary human organization? And are there not methods used, and doctrines taught, and influences exerted, and practices countenanced, and habits of absenteeism from the regular services of the sanctuary established, which are anything but conducive to a healthy religious sentiment, to sound views of Christian truth, or to a consistent life of godliness? To ask these grave questions is to answer them. And will the Church of the living God look supinely on, and see this great institution not only lose its power for good, but become a great overshadowing evil influence, because it has slipped away from the true foundation, and come to be ruled by motives of ambition, and principles of worldly wisdom?

And was the world ever so full of "unclean spirits" of every kind as at the present time? Their name is "legion," and like "the locusts of Egypt" they are everywhere. Look in upon our numberless *theatres* in full blast, many of them even on the Sabbath, where indecency, and harlotry, and adultery are paraded in every fascinating way. Look at our num-

berless *brothels*, where prostitution is openly carried on as a "business," as well as flaunted as a great "social evil"—not only "winked at" by the guardians of law, but often abetted and legalized. Look at our tens of thousands of grogshops, where brutes and demons are manufactured, day and night, at a rate sufficient to appall a man of any reflection, or sensibility. Look at the nude pictures in our art galleries, and on parlor walls; and at the obscene papers, and books, and wood-cuts, illustrating them. There is moral poison enough in them to taint the very air we breathe, and corrupt all our youth, and destroy personal and national morality. And the fever for "*divorce*" now raging so frightfully, and the *corruption* which reeks in high places, in all our politics, and legislation, and places of trust, all come from one and the same source. Man is little more than the instrument and victim. "The Devil and his angels" are the chief instigators and moral force which produce them.

The common sentiment of the Christian world to-day is not far removed from the mood of Elijah when he stood on Horeb and waited for the divine displays. Her grasp on the all-sufficiency of supernatural truth and supernatural influences, is greatly weakened. Her faith in the power of the Gospel, simple and pure, to enlighten, interest and convert sinners, and hold them to the faith of the Cross, is fearfully shaken. Nature is invoked, in a thousand ways, to attract, and charm, and interest, and help to reform and save a race that, in some respects, is waxing worse and worse continually. Not a few of our Christian churches are fast coming to be "run" after a fashion borrowed from the theatre. The Gospel preached, or desired and sought by the people, is not the simple, grand old Gospel preached by Paul, and Peter, and John,—preached by the Reformers in the days of Huss, and Luther, and Melancthon, and Zwingle—preached by the Puritans in old England and in New England, and by the Huguenots in France, and the Waldenses in the valleys of Piedmont—preached by Hooker and Edwards, and Bellamy, and Hopkins, and Davies, and Dwight, and Griffin, and Richards, and Emmons, and Lyman Beecher, and Albert Barnes, and Finney and Moody. But it is a gospel

of "man's devices," the main end and feature of which are, to "draw" a full house, to "attract" a fashionable, wealthy, respectable, cultivated, and, above all, *paying* congregation.

A *new dispensation* really has crept in—a dispensation of showy, costly, and luxurious edifices, "with all modern improvements," in the way of operatic music, and æsthetic culture, and social festivities, including "church entertainments," "concerts," "festivals," "dancing entertainments," and even in one instance an "annex theatre" for amateur theatricals!—a new dispensation in the matter of *preaching*, under which doctrine, sturdy common sense, loyalty to convictions and settled opinions, plain, practical, faithful exposition of the Word, have given place, to a most lamentable extent, to mere culture, learning, fastidious tastes fine sentiment, and highly wrought sensational methods.

I do not refer to these things in a light or flippant way. They are sad realities; and have a significance far beyond that given them in the popular estimation. And scarcely a voice is raised against them. The popular tide is running so strong in this direction, that, whatever be the opinion of individual Christians, or pastors, they seemingly dare not so much as utter a protest. And most of our religious papers and periodicals, keep silent. But for an occasional "deliverance" of a General Assembly, or Synod, or Association, or Conference, the world would not suspect but that the new dispensation was generally accepted as a great advance—in the *science*, shall we call it, or the *art?* of converting sinners—and converting them so "genteelly," so "respectably," so imperceptibly, as that they shall hardly know that they are converted at all, or the world suspect the change. The process so little disturbs them, and the manner of their lives remains so essentially the same as it was before! But *what mean these things?* Whither their tendency? What the fruit we are to expect from them in the generation coming upon the stage of active life, to educate the children and youth of the land, to fill our pulpits, to write our books, and run our newspapers and magazines? Do they not *emphasize* what I have said, as to the growth of Naturalism, the tendency to Materialistic ideas, the decadence of faith in the supernatural? What will the moral power of the Church be

good for a generation hence, under such a spiritual regimen? What will there be left of the distinctive type of Christianity which glories only in the Cross? How long will it be possible to preserve the heavenly spirit, and the heavenly principles of a kingdom which Christ himself affirmed to be "not of this world," when the modes, and the means chosen and employed for their conservation and advancement, are essentially earthly, both in their cast and spirit?

Those—and the number is not small, and included in it are many of our most earnest, and spiritually-minded, and hard-working Christians—those who are anxiously looking for the coming of our Lord in bodily form to administer his earthly kingdom, know not what they are praying for. The personal presence of Christ here on this earthly theatre, is but a return, substantially, to the system of nature. His personal ministry was comparatively a failure, *estimated by the number of converts he made*, notwithstanding he "spake as never man spake," and commended and enforced his ministry by numerous miracles of grace and power. Far more converts were made under a single sermon of Peter's—and that sermon, from an outline given of it in Acts, 2: 14–36, was by no means a remarkable one, save in its boldness, and loyalty to the Master—more than Christ gathered during his whole ministry! And the same remark will apply to not a few preachers of our own immediate time, as well as of the past.

And we have not far to look for the *reason* of it. Then, as now, and ever will be to the end of the world, God will verify his words spoken to Zerubbabel: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." Zech. 4: 6. The dispensation of the *Spirit* did not begin until *after* Christ's ascension into heaven. He instructed his disciples to tarry at Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high. He had promised them, moreover, in the event of his leaving them, to send them another Comforter, even the Spirit of truth, who should lead them into all truth, take of the things of Christ and show them unto them. And on the day of Pentecost, under the very first gospel sermon preached in the name of the crucified Saviour, that glorious promise was fulfilled. The Spirit came down, "as of a rushing mighty wind,

and it filled the house" in which the disciples were gathered, and "the same day there were added unto them [the 120 disciples] about three thousand souls." The most wonderful ministry ever exercised in behalf of souls was almost barren of practical results, because, in the economy of the dispensations, the Holy Spirit had not yet been poured out.

And this is the *explanation* for the failure of so many preachers of eminent gifts, and superior learning and accomplishment, and of extraordinary opportunities. And, on the contrary, for the marked success, in the way of spiritual results—the only results worth taking into the account—of men in no way remarkable for mental powers, or for eloquence, or social gifts and deficient in professional and general culture, and knowing and caring nothing for the methods of the schools. In this way—by such experiences as these, common in the church, and patent to all men—God abases all human parts, and gifts, and reliances, and puts honor, special honor, upon the agency and methods of the Spirit. *The dispensation of the Spirit*, after all that men may think or assert to the contrary, and as scripture, and the experience of the church, ever since the Pentecostal effusion, abundantly confirm, is the *one hope* for the world. It has always been so. And it is emphatically true in an age like the *present*, when physical forces dominate on every hand; when "things seen and temporal," hold such powerful sway over men's minds and affections, and when "the still small voice" of reason, of conscience in the soul, and of the Word which comes down from God out of heaven, is drowned by the clangor of a thousand brazen trumpets.

All history, all experience, testifies, that there is salvation in no other way than by the Cross: that there is "none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved than the name Christ Jesus." Every saint in heaven, and every saint on earth, has found it true. And where, my reader, did you yourself find the power of a new-created life, but in this Word? this Word which voices the promises, the provisions, and the pleadings of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world? this Word which was "foolishness" to the cultivated Greek of the Areopagus, and is "foolishness" still in the estimation of the votaries of nature, and the devotees of

mammon? If you have *ever* found peace in believing; if your heart has *ever* melted in contrition for sin and leaped for joy under a sense of forgiveness; if you have *ever* been led to consecrate your life, with all your powers, and gifts, and possessions, to a purpose worthy of a rational and immortal creature, —you owe it all to this "*Word*" which "God has magnified above all his name." To "all them that perish;" to sinners of every age, and clime, and condition, to whom "Christ is as a root out of a dry ground," without "beauty or comeliness;" to the undevout astronomer, to the infidel scientist, to the learned philosopher, who fails to discover "the truth as it is in Jesus;" to all who are vainly striving to gain the world. and all the glory and good things of it; to all such—and they comprise the major part of mankind—the Word which God has magnified from all eternity as the concentrated wisdom and power of his kingdom, and made so illustrious as the channel of revelation to the world, and the instrument of salvation to millions of perishing souls—to all such it is "foolishness, but unto us which are saved, it is *the power of God.*"

Redemption, therefore, is the crowning work of the Divine Mind. It is the *Sun* set in the moral firmament. All systems, all dispensations, all things, revolve about it, as the central orb which holds them all in place, and which diffuses light and life everywhere. Not only does this work outshine all other works, and explain and subordinate all others, but it is in itself an immense accession of good to the kingdom of God. Christianity is not an incidental good, or a supplementary institution. It is the original constitution of things; it is the radical, all-permeating spirit and principle of it. It is likewise the *costliest* of all God's works; it lies nearest his infinite heart. With the material creation, he spake and it was done, commanded and it stood fast. His fiat went forth, and worlds and systems sprang into being, and rolled onward in their majestic orbits, obedient to his will. And so in the realm of Providence. Not a thought disturbs the Infinite serenity. Not an element, not an agency, not an event, gives him anxiety. He "knows the end from the beginning," and is calm, self-possessed, tranquil, rejoicing in spirit.

But consider the *preparations* for this crowning work. They began way back in the "councils of eternity," erst Nature had brought forth a star, or a creature of any kind. It was matter of solemn "covenant" between Father and Son before the foundations of the world were laid. Four thousand years of promise, and prophecy, and ritual offering, and temple service, and ceremonial washing, heralded the coming of the Messiah, and prepared the world to receive this seemingly new but really "everlasting kingdom." Nothing but Love, Infinite Love, induced the Father to make the sacrifice of his "only begotten Son" and the Son to consent to a sacrifice, an humiliation, that will be the wonder of all time, and the wonder of eternity. What *fullness*, what *intensity* of expression, is there in those familiar words: "For God *so loved* the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life." John 3: 16. Having made *such a sacrifice*—laid the very "apple of his eye" on the altar of atonement—what else is there for him to give, or to withhold? "For if God spared not his own Son, how shall he not *with him* also freely give us all things?" And the reality and measure of sacrifice involved in God's "unspeakable gift," is the measure of the worth, the superiority, the moral grandeur of the Redemptive work. It is *God's own testimony*, and it is a testimony so affecting, and solemn, and weighty, that it is a profound marvel that it fails to wake a dying world from its guilty slumbers and compel men "to flee from the wrath to come" by laying hold of "the Hope set before them in the gospel." For, a God who can love like this, can also hate and punish like a God! He who has laid *such* an offering upon the altar of sacrifice, surely will not spare the man who wantonly despises it.

Think you that *such* a gift, such a sacrifice, such an endurance, would have been made and undergone, on the part both of Father and Son, if they did not see and know that the *fruit* would be correspondingly great and precious? that the final result would warrant the stupendous preparation, justify "the shedding of blood," even the blood of the Lamb of God, slain before the foundation of the world? justify the scenes of Gethsemane, of Pilate's, and Herod's judgment halls, and of

Calvary? if the final outcome of it all was not to be such that God himself should contemplate it with infinite satisfaction, and angels, and the redeemed Church together in heaven, find eternal life and blessedness in?

Is it not simply amazing, that with *such a theme*—a theme replete with wonders so divine, burdened with doctrines so momentous, telling of sacrifices of such an amazing character, unfolding a system of Omnipotent grace and love, illustrating the ways of God to man and bringing him down to us in the relations of elder Brother, Teacher, Guide, Friend, Saviour, and speaking to every man in "the still small voice" of the Spirit's power,—is it not amazing, I repeat, that with *such a theme* as the burden of our ministry, we can ever be *dull*, ever be *lifeless*, ever be without *power?* Is it not surprising, that with such a theme preached to them Sabbath by Sabbath, by the living voice of God's ministry, and day by day in their homes from the page of the inspired Word, the people who enjoy this Light, which eclipses the noonday sun, should still "sit in darkness and in the region and shadow of death?" that the people upon whose ears falls the Voice which gives expression to the whole supernatural system of grace, should fail to hear? fail to be quickened by the trumpet of a resurrection that is bringing "dead bones, and bones very dry" to life again and clothing them with moral beauty? should remain "estranged," and going after strange gods, gods of silver and gold, and lust and mammon, when the Divine Son of God, who wears the crown of heaven, and has crowns and mansions in glory to bestow, is offered to them as Father, Saviour, Comforter, everlasting Portion?

Oh yes! it is the marvel of marvels—the wonder and grief of angels—that we who are set apart by Divine appointment, and by the vows of voluntary consecration, to represent this Divinest system of truth, and to administer the word and ordinances of this glorious kingdom—to preach doctrines of such awful import, and big with the eternal destinies of man—that we should ever do it with hearts out of tune with its wondrous and everlasting harmony, with stammering speech, from a low ambition, for sordid ends, and with methods borrowed from the schools of worldly wisdom, rather than "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power."

Before closing this chapter I cannot refrain from citing a passage from Pres. Edwards' incomparable work, "The History of the Work of Redemption." Lengthy as it is it will amply repay not only a careful reading but earnest study. There is in this work matter enough for a hundred sermons. It contains the seeds of some of the grandest thoughts that have ever found expression in human language.

"And from what has been said, one may argue that the work of redemption is the greatest of all God's works of which we have any notice, and it is the end of all his other works. It appears plainly from what has been said, that this is the principal of all God's works of providence, and that all are subordinate to the great affair of redemption. We see that all the revolutions in the world are to subserve this grand design. This shows how much greater the work of redemption is than the work of creation, as it is the end of it, as the use of the house is the end of the building it. But the work of redemption is the sum of all God's works of providence; all are subordinate to it: so the work of the new creation is more excellent than the old. So it ever is, that when one thing is removed by God to make way for another, the new one excels the old. Thus the temple excelled the tabernacle; the new covenant the old; the new dispensation of the gospel the dispensation of Moses; the throne of David the throne of Saul; the priesthood of Christ the priesthood of Aaron; the new Jerusalem the old; and so the new creation far excels the old.

"God has used the creation for no other purpose but to subserve the designs of this affair. To answer this end he hath created and disposed of mankind; to this the angels, to this the earth, to this the highest heavens. God created the world to provide a spouse and a Kingdom for his Son; and the setting up of the kingdom of Christ, and the spiritual marriage of the spouse to him, is what the whole creation labors and travails in pain to bring to pass. This work of redemption is so much the greatest of all the works of God, that all other works are to be looked upon either as parts of it, or appendages to it, or are some way reducible to it; and so all the decrees of God some way or other belong to that eternal covenant of redemption which was between the Father and the Son before the foundation of the world. Every decree of God is some way or other reducible to that covenant. And seeing this work of redemption is so great, we need not wonder that the angels desire to look into it. And we need not wonder that so much is made of it in scripture, that it is so much insisted on in the histories, and prophecies, and

songs of the Bible; for the work of redemption is the great subject of the whole, its doctrines, its promises, its types, its songs, its histories, and its prophecies." *

In connection with these views, so tersely expressed by this master in Israel, and amplified and confirmed by him in other parts of the work, with such a wealth of biblical language and argument, I beg the liberty to submit a passage of great beauty and force from a work by one of England's distinguished religious writers. It is not difficult to trace the influence of New England's great divine of the last century in the writings of Dr. Harris.

"Ours is the CROSS—the great power of God—not only absorbing and concentrating all the influences of the past, but charged with a new power direct from God—containing in its bosom all the springs of benevolence the world will ever know; an energy of expansive goodness, capable of replenishing the universe with light and love. Here God is seen enriching the world with a gift which leaves it nothing to dread, or to ask for more. Here Christ is seen taking the world to his heart—seizes our nature as it trembles over the bottomless gulf—assuming it into union with his own—taking our place under the descending stroke of Justice, and suffering in our stead. Before our eyes "Jesus Christ is here evidently set forth crucified amongst us." Here the Infinite Spirit himself, descends from the height of his everlasting dwelling-place, as a rushing mighty wind—and the cries of penitence are heard around. Here angels, drawn from heaven, bend to gaze and labor, to comprehend the mystery of incarnate love. Apostles come to lose themselves in wonder, and exclaim, 'herein is love;' and to surcharge their hearts with a benevolence which impels them to the ends of the earth testifying that 'the Father hath sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.' Here the bigotry of the Synagogue, the doubts of the Academy, and the pride of the Portico, are seen kneeling around and humbled in the dust. And here he who was the fit representative of them all, comes to smite on his breast and say, 'God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ,' and hastens away to fill the nations with the report of its glories, and to call on all who believed it to help him onwards to the regions beyond." †

* Edwards' Works, Vol. III., pp. 426, 427.

† The Great Commission, by Rev. John Harris, D.D., pp. 125, 126.

CHAPTER XI.

GOD'S FAVORITE WORK DISPARAGED BY MANKIND.

We might reasonably expect that creatures, blinded by the god of this world, and alienated from the true God by reason of wicked works, would fail to appreciate a kingdom of spiritual truths, spiritual laws and agencies, spiritual labor and reward. Human nature, under the law of sin, would not be human nature, if this were not so. Accordingly, we find the dominant spirit in the unregenerate heart, and the dominant forces in human society, so far as they are unchanged, and uncontrolled by divine grace, are hostile to Christianity. The natural heart is declared to be at "enmity with God"—not simply indifferent, "caring for none of these things"—but positively opposed to his reign, to his character, and in league with "the enemy of all righteousness." Hence, when wicked men, unregenerate men, despise the glorious gospel, and turn away from it as from a low, mean thing, and devote their thoughts, and bestow their affections, upon things inferior and transient, things dishonoring to God, and ruinous to their own souls; we have no reason to be surprised. It is just what we might expect: it is acting a part befitting the real and terrible nature of sin.

But when those who claim to have yielded their hearts to the higher law; to have passed from a state of nature to a state of grace; to "have tasted of the good word of God, and felt the powers of the world to come;" to have fellowshiped the sufferings of Christ and come under the attractions of the cross,—when *such* turn again to "the weak and beggarly elements of the world;" come to "lust after the flesh-pots of Egypt;" to forsake the living fountain of water and "hew out to themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, which can hold no

water;" to suffer their faith in the cross to be eclipsed by lesser lights, and the world, and the flesh, to resume their sway over them—we have abundant occasion for surprise and grief.

And yet what sight is more common? Turn which way you will—look in whatsoever direction you please—see you not "Christ wounded in the house of his friends?" Christ bartered away for "filthy lucre," or for office, or fame, or pleasure? the Christian life scarcely traceable in the mass of disciples? the divine word fast losing its power to interest dying men, and transform them by the renewing of their minds into the image of Christ? All such, of course, and in all these ways, *disparage*—greatly and most wickedly disparage—the work which God specially delights to honor; and in so doing they incur his infinite displeasure. And He is sure one day to *vindicate* his favorite plan, on which he has lavished the choicest treasures of his wisdom and power, and offered up in sacrifice the life of His only begotten Son.

But it is possible to disparage Christianity without meaning it: to dishonor the cross while praising and laboring to advance it: to present the gospel in a way to rob it of its chief charms and divinest power. And just this, it seems to me, is what is being done—done even by many whose office it is "to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ." They believe the gospel. They accept its doctrines as from God. And they are sincere in their profession, and loyal to Christ, as a principle of conduct. But somehow they fail to grasp the stupendous system which they have embraced. Their conceptions are weak, their views are low and mean, their convictions are not earnest, their hearts are not enlarged, and their souls sublimated by the vision of the cross. They never seem to come really into the shadow of it, to catch the inspiration of it, or feel the power of it, as Paul did, for instance, when he exclaimed with holy passion: "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." And the consequence is, there is very little enthusiasm, very little spiritual power, in their preaching. We must ourselves rise, in some good degree, to the intellectual and moral height of the gospel, in order to attract and lift up sinners into the higher life.

We must take a broad, strong, commanding view of the system of grace, if we expect to attract men away from nature, from the gods of science, and philosophy, and mammon. We must be able to plant the cross in the very centre and throne of human thought, and compel the world to do homage to it, in order to make it "the wisdom and power of God unto salvation." We must so fill our own minds with the moral grandeur of Jesus Christ, as the one Wisdom, the one Hero, the one Saviour, the one Life, the one Force and Attraction of the ages: so drink into His Spirit, and be so filled with his fullness, as that our life, our ministry, humble, and unworthy, and weak as it is, in itself, shall yet become a living, attracting, irresistible moral and spiritual force in our respective spheres. What though the gospel *be* "committed to earthen vessels:" *it is the gospel still*—the gospel of a divine life and salvation to a dead lost world—the very "treasure" of God's own wisdom and power. And it is committed to such mean "vessels" on purpose to demonstrate to the world that "the excellency is of God and not of man;" that the power is in the word, and not in the instrument.

And then the natural tendencies and proclivities of our nature, and of this whole earthly system, in its influence upon us, are downward, earth-ward, in the direction of the sensual, the temporal, the low and weak, that without a constant and resolute effort to tone up our mental and spiritual natures, to lift our eyes and aims higher, even to "the everlasting hills, whence cometh our help;" to rise into the sphere of spiritualities, and get nigh to the Throne of all glory and power, and hold intimate and blessed communings with the risen and exalted Saviour—if we fail to do this, we shall only "plod" along the low beaten paths of life, and be satisfied with meager results; be incapable, indeed, of achieving anything at all commensurate with the exalted ends and character of the gospel we preach.

And then we are so *accustomed* to take narrow and limited views of things; the horizon of our life extends at best over so little a circle of thought, and activities, and experiences; we so habitually look at Christianity, and preach it, in its application to individual sinners actually in view, and to immediate

results; with reference to our own little spheres of personal duty and interest—that we are in danger, always, of overlooking and forgetting the higher, broader, grander aspects of the kingdom of God; of the moral and spiritual system, which we are divinely appointed to represent in the world, and to expound and make practically effective. And yet in *these very aspects lie the main power and glory of the system.*

This was the secret of Paul's extraordinary ministry. He so filled his mind, and burdened his soul with the mighty theme of Redemption in its entirety, that he became, in his ministry, a very *sun*, shining in its strength, illumining nations, and chasing away the thick darkness of superstition, and false philosophy, and guiding multitudes to the cross. Study the Pauline epistles. You must *study* them, long and earnestly, to know them. What grandeur of conception! What height, and depth, and breadth, and wealth, of sanctified thought! What power of argument, and intensity of expression! How wondrous, how sublime, how divinely glorious, does the Gospel appear, under his pen! And thus he *preached*. His epistles are only a few specimens of his written sermons. Would God *such written* sermons might be preached in all the pulpits of our land! The people would then no longer cry out against *written* sermons. They would want to hear no others. And look at Jonathan Edwards. Read his "sermons," to say nothing of his other writings, and you will cease to wonder at the great power and effect of his preaching. "Great awakenings" —intense "convictions of sin," multitudes moved as by a mighty whirlwind or a rending earthquake, a whole congregasion convulsed with weeping, and actually looking up to see if the great God were not coming down through the rent sky to take vengeance on his enemies. Such results were just what we might *expect* from a ministry so saturated and intensified with the divine elements and forces of Christianity.

Whenever that system of supernatural truth achieves its legitimate effects on the mind and the heart of the *preacher*, as in the case of Paul, and Edwards, and others, whom it were easy to name; whenever he drinks deep at the sacred fountain, and comes before his people from the very "mount of God," where he has held converse with things and powers divinely

glorious, and handles the awful mysteries of religion, and unfolds its doctrines, and applies its arguments, and wields its influences, under the full inspiration of God's plan for saving men, rest assured *corresponding results* may be confidently predicted. I have always found it so in my own experience. And so, I doubt not, has every preacher.

It is possible to take all the sap, all the life, all the power out of Christianity, by rigidly confining ourselves to the practical side of it, or to the narrow limits of our personal sphere, reducing it thereby to a round of daily duties and performances, a monotonous, if not killing, routine of observances and ordinances. Just as it is possible to abstract from it all that is truly divine and converting, by looking at it from the intellectual side exclusively; thereby reducing religion to a theory, a speculation, a philosophy, a formulated "creed," a dry "body of divinity," or a transcendental rhapsody. The true idea is to blend and harmonize the two methods; in other words, to look at Christianity in its entirety. If we would be preachers of *power;* able to move men's hearts, and convert their souls, and "add to the Church of such as shall be saved," we must not only be "filled with the Holy Ghost," but at the same time also "filled with the spirit of wisdom and understanding," able "rightly to divide the word of life, and give to each a portion in due season;" *masters,* so far as it is possible to be, of the highest and profoundest philosophy known to man; and masters also of the divine science of so working on men's minds and hearts as to win them to a life of virtue and godliness—transform them in their moral natures from the image of the "earthy" into the very "likeness of God!"

The prejudice so common in these days against "*doctrinal* preaching," is a stupid, senseless feeling. It has been my good fortune to hear a great number of preachers, distinguished and otherwise. And I can testify that by far the most interesting and effective sermons I have heard might be called "doctrinal." The foundation, the substance, was some important doctrine of the Word, unfolded in the light of revelation, illustrated and applied, by argument, and appeal, and human experience. One of the most remarkable preachers of this generation, for uniform impressiveness and effectiveness, was

the late Dr. Spencer, of Brooklyn, N. Y., author of "Pastor's Sketches," a work of intense interest and high practical value to every preacher, and also several volumes of posthumous "sermons." He seldom preached in any other way, and he never failed to make his mark.

If the reader has any doubt on this point, let him *test* the matter for himself. Try, if you have never done it, a new dispensation of things. With the Word and Spirit of God as your sole guide and "help," sit down to a fresh and thorough investigation and study of the "Plan of Salvation." Let alone every "commentary," all human "helps," all human "authorities." Plant your feet hard by the Cross, as the central fact, the central doctrine, and the central force, of the system. Look at each essential doctrine and fact as it stands related to this. Then begin with the beginning of things, the "one Mediator," and trace the Divine purpose down through the ages, and through the manifold economies and dispensations, to the end of the world, and to its consummation amid the awful solemnities of the judgment day. Then go back and take up each essential fact and doctrine, and ascertain its true place in the system and its relations to it as a whole. Then study history, sacred and profane, and the great book of Providence, and draw on your reading for illustrations and confirmations. And when you have mastered the grand Theme, as far as the limitations of human thought and your circumstances will allow, give yourself, for weeks and months and years, if necessary, under the full inspiration of such an investigation, to the work of careful, earnest, thorough preparation of a series of sermons, essentially embracing the whole supernatural scheme, combining the highest forms of the doctrinal with the intensest and widest application of the practical. And having done this, to the best of your ability, and in the spirit of an overmastering loyalty to the truth, and to the souls committed to your charge, *preach* them to your people on successive Sabbaths, with all the boldness, and freshness, and power, and urgency, which the mastery of your theme is sure to inspire, as well as with prayer for the promised agency of the Holy Spirit to make the truth effectual. Do this, and *sure* I am, you will be surprised at the *results;* not only upon your people, in re-

viving interest, in edifying the household of faith, and in rousing sinners from their indifference and death-stupor; but equally surprised at its effect upon *yourself*, both immediate, and future.

I write from *personal experience*, as well as from the teachings of a wide observation. At the age of forty, while ministering to a large and promiscuous congregation, above the average in point of education, and intelligence, I *did* precisely what I have outlined above. For twelve successive Sabbaths, after months of hard study, and fresh investigation, and careful preparation, I preached on this one theme—Christ's Redemptive Work—and in those twelve sermons went over the same field in part which I am traversing in this book, and gave expression, substantially, to the views herein expressed, so far as they are specially related to that theme. And the *effect* I can never forget. On *myself*, it was almost transforming. Under that process the gospel became, as it were, a new gospel to me. It gave me a new inspiration. I was never conscious of having such power before in preaching it. It gave a new cast, a higher life, a diviner interest, to my ministry. And after the lapse of thirty years, it remains *still*, not only as a "pleasing memory," but as an abiding power with me.

And the effect on my people was equally striking, and manifest. I was able to carry with me a congregation of a thousand souls, from step to step with eager and growing interest to the last. It did not weary of the subject. The attendance increased from Sabbath to Sabbath. The interest at times became intense and all-pervading in the community. The sermons were talked about and discussed during the week, and the MSS. borrowed and read by large numbers who were not content to hear them preached. Never, during my ministry, did the *application* of gospel truths seem to carry such weight, to have such power to quicken the intellect, and stir the heart, and rouse the conscience of the unconverted, as under that series of written "doctrinal" sermons. And the spiritual fruits of the series were manifest and abiding. So great and general was the interest awakened by them that many of the people were anxious to have them published; and a desire to do it was expressed by a leading New York pub-

lisher who heard the sermons preached. Bear in mind, it was not the *preacher* who created this new and wide interest in the Gospel; for it was their regular pastor, to whom they had become accustomed. It was the Theme, and the somewhat novel method of handling it, that created and intensified this feeling among all that people, noted for their religious character and appreciation of sanctuary privileges. It was not "another gospel," in any sense, that stirred them up; but "the old story." But that wondrous story was told with "variations," with broader views, and deeper significance, and immensely wider relations, than was wont.*

The truth is, at the best, we are so accustomed to view the Gospel simply as a scheme to save mankind from perdition, that we practically forget that even this good, great as it is, and the gospel which achieves it, "worthy of all acceptation," for this reason, is yet only *a means to a higher end:* that the appointment of a Mediator, the sacrifice of Calvary, and the system of moral agencies administered by the Saviour of the world, have other, and wider, and more important relations, and applications, and ends to answer, than any or all involved in rescuing a portion of Adam's race from hell. When Christ "rejoices in spirit" over the fruitage of his mediatorial reign and sacrificial offering; when he "sees of the travail of his soul" in the period of his great humiliation, and "is satisfied," he takes in a much wider and higher range of blessings than the peopling of heaven with a portion of an inferior race of beings, dwelling on this little obscure planet, the very existence of which would never be known beyond a very limited

*I venture to subjoin an incident connected with the delivery of these sermons, as it is highly suggestive, and at the same time illustrates what I have elsewhere written. I had for my hearer one Sabbath, a distinguished D D. from the city of New York—a man of wide culture, of exalted position in the church, and of commanding influence in her affairs. Meeting him a few hours after, he quite took me to task for what he was pleased to call my "bold speculations." He was sure I had "no authority from the Bible for teaching that angels had any personal interest in the scheme of man's redemption!" Had he followed me from the beginning, possibly he would not have said what he did; but he heard only one sermon, and that in the middle of the series. Had that learned D.D. ever read his Bible? I could not help pitying his ignorance, and praying for his enlightenment!

circle in the wide universe of being but for considerations connected with Christ's moral kingdom. The kingdom of "Righteousness and Peace," which Christ has established on the basis of his one atonement, and by moral agencies connected with it and growing out of it is perfecting, is to be the "*everlasting*" kingdom of God the Father, which kingdom is to harmonize the *universe* of intelligences and gather together in one glorious Family *all* the loyal sons of God, of whatever world, or race, or order of beings.

I have rapidly glanced at some of the ways in which God's favorite work is *thoughtlessly and unwittingly disparaged.* Would that this were all! But there is another, and much larger class of men, who, knowingly, purposely, systematically, and with *malice prepense,* disparage Christianity. There are writers, thinkers, scholars, philosophers, statesmen, preachers, literati, who absolutely *despise and hate* the system on which hangs every hope of man for eternity, and the very crowns and happiness of angels. In the loftiness of their pride, and arrogance, and self sufficiency, they scarcely deign to give a thought to the system of truth revealed in Scripture; and pity the weakness and credulity of those who pin their faith to it and strive to regulate their lives by it. They count the gospel a small affair amidst the grandeurs of nature. They see no wisdom in it to compare with the wisdom of the schools; nothing in the doctrine of the Nazarene half so grand as they find in science or philosophy; nothing in faith or prayer or repentance, or the new life, or in self-sacrifice, or God's service, at all equal to the fascinations of their favorite study, or the attractions of business, or society. A doctrine, a system of belief, which has prime respect to the unseen God, the soul, eternity, salvation from sin, and a meetness for heaven, is a doctrine which finds no response in their nature; a system abhorrent alike to their reason, and to their moral tastes.

Among this multitude of men and women, who see nothing divine, nothing attractive, in the pages of the Bible, or in the service of Christ, are the enthusiasts of Nature. To them "the music of the spheres," or of the grove; the cadences of mur-

muring streams, and the dulcet sounds of love and friendship, are sweeter than "the strains of Calvary," and the celestial harmonies of a redeemed life. The beauty of the blooming flower, the glory of the firmament, and the philosophy of nature, have diviner charms for them than "the Rose of Sharon," the glory of "the morning Star," or the "Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation." There are those who claim to be *Christian philosophers;* to have learned all there is in Christianity that is learnable; to have explored the whole vast field and attained the ultimate end; and yet they are not satisfied. The "fullness" of Christ does not suffice to satisfy their ambition. Even the glory of the Cross pales on their vision. And they turn to pastures greener, to fountains deeper, to visions diviner.

As an illustration of this thought; of the tendency of all human reasoning, all human philosophizing, to exalt the natural at the expense of the supernatural, the system of nature above the system of grace, I refer to the writings of the late Thomas Dick, D.D., an English writer of high repute, and deservedly popular, in both hemispheres. His writings generally are intellectually fresh, vigorous, and original; while the moral tone and religious bearings of them are in the main of a high character, and of the right sort. But in his work entitled "The Philosophy of a Future State,"* he certainly falls into a very serious and noteworthy error—the common error, as I have said, of all human philosophies, even at their best estate —the error of exalting Nature above Redemption While discoursing so eloquently on the varied and august grandeur of innumerable worlds and systems of stars, he quite forgets for the time

> —"the sweet wonders of that Cross
> Where God the Saviour loved and died,"

and to have very little sympathy, if any at all, with the "new song" sung in heaven over the grander displays and achievements of grace. "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for thou hast created all things, and for

* The Philosophy of a Future State By Thomas Dick, author of The Christian Philosopher, The Philosophy of Religion, etc., etc. Philadelphia: Key & Biddle, 1833.

thy pleasure [use in the world of Redemption] they are and were created." "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." Rev. 5: 12, 13. He argues at length, in this work, to show that the system of Redemption is confined to so *narrow* a sphere in the range of its facts, doctrines, and achievements, that it must necessarily be soon *exhausted* in the active studies and pursuits of the heavenly kingdom; and therefore the saints in glory will turn to fresher and grander themes of contemplation.

"It has been asserted that the 'mysteries of redemption will be sufficient to afford scope for the delightful investigation of the saints to all eternity.' It is readily admitted, that contemplations of the divine perfections, as displayed in human redemption and of the stupendous facts which relate to that economy, will blend themselves with all the other exercises of redeemed intelligences. While their intellectual faculties are taking the most extensive range through the dominion of Him who sits upon the throne of universal nature, they will never forget that love which brought them from darkness to light, and from the depths of misery to the splendors of eternal day. Their grateful and triumphant praises will ascend to the Father of glory and to the Lamb who was slain, forever and ever. But, at the same time, the range of objects comprised within the scheme of redemption, in its reference to human beings, cannot be supposed, without the aid of other objects of contemplation, to afford full and uninterrupted scope to the faculties of the saints in heaven, throughout an unlimited duration." *

He argues further, on the ground of essential *similarity* in the experience and character of the subjects of grace, and in the operations of Providence in relation to them and to the work of Redemption, to show that the *limits* of knowledge and interest, in this direction, will quickly be reached. He even asserts, that after a while, "however august and astonishing" is "the glorified body of Christ," the saints will tire in beholding it. "The Head of the redeemed family of man," "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," whose person is the very "brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person," and in whose face shines such light that there "is no need of the sun nor of the moon

* Philosophy of a Future State, p. 183.

nor of the stars" - He, the centre of all moral attraction, the source of all spiritual life, and the end of all things—in which all things "*consist*," be lost sight of and forgotten, in the presence of other objects of interest, and other lights of the universe! And this is the teaching of "Philosophy!" Oh, the blindness, the stupidity, the "foolishness," of the human intellect, when it breaks away from the illuminating power of the Word and Spirit of God!

Analyze this theory. Look for an instant at its *limitations*. He persistently restricts his view to "the redeemed family of man," right in the face of scripture testimony to the contrary, and in contravention of the spirit and genius of Christianity itself. He limits his views of the scope and reconciling forces of the kingdom of Christ, to this obscure speck in the natural creation: whereas we are expressly told that Christ is the grand reconciliator of *all things*, "in heaven, and in earth, and under the earth:" that He is the Head of God's entire commonwealth or family, which embraces all holy intelligences, and encompasses eternity. He *begins* by a false and senseless limitation of the scope and sweep of the Redemptive scheme.

Its *superficiality* is equally apparent. He assumes, what is palpably not true, that nature in her diversified forms, and immensity of existences, has as much power, and even more, to interest and gratify the pure, spiritual, and exalted intelligences in the future state as Mind, intellect, moral ideas, moral influences and conflicts, in shaping and guiding the affairs and government of the universe; as the displays of the moral attributes and perfections of Deity in relation to law, to transgression, to probation, to the great atoning sacrifice, to the rescue, and transformation, and exaltation to glory in heaven of Adam's lost race. Such an *assumption* is gross injustice to the subject under consideration and is unworthy of one claiming to be a "philosopher," and professing to solve the stupendous problem of the future state from a philosophical standpoint. It betrays ignorance of the amazing superiority of mind to matter: of powers, influences, forces, to inert, dead substances which move only as they are moved upon by mind; subserve no end whatsoever, save as they are shaped and controlled by a supernatural purpose and power.

He also reasons *falsely*, even on the narrow premises chosen, and in the light of his unwarranted assumptions. There are two propositions to his argument, and they are both maintained on grounds illogical and unscriptural. The first is, that the immensity and endless variety of nature give it the advantage over the single and completed work of Redemption. On this theory immensity and variety are more important factors than radical and all-comprehensive moral principles, and their relations to the moral universe of existence; to law and order and society, to time and eternity, to God's everlasting kingdom, and the tremendous problems of life and destiny. All of which is the *reverse* of the truth. The natural system bewilders, oppresses, by its extent and magnitude. It inspires awe and wonderment, as we contemplate it. But there is nothing in immensity, in quantity, in infinitudes of physical existence, to impress, to electrify and mould the moral nature of rational existences, or to convey to them a vivid and exalted conception of God. "God is expressed but not measured by his works." "God's true system takes in nature, but only as a subordinate and humble member of it."

We experience the truth of this even in this life. Modern astronomy is little more than a vast and complicated system of *arithmetic*. The eye, the mind, can take in but an infinitesimal part of nature. Then we must resort to *numerals* to complete the view. And these are marshaled in such dread array, to express quantity, and distance, that we give up in despair. We cannot so much as articulate the figures, much less comprehend them! And they impress us morally as much as the idea of infinity impresses us, and no more. We give up in despair.

No: immensity, and variety are not the chief or even the essential factors, in the problem of rational existence. The *one sacrifice of Calvary*, in its infinite relations to God, to the kingdom of Christ, and to the future of creature existences, is far more significant and impressive, instructive and effective, on character and destiny, than the whole system of nature put together.

The other proposition is equally fallacious. Because there is not only a limited range of facts and doctrines in the

system of grace, but also such *similarity* in the fruits of it, and in the operations of the Word, and Spirit, and Providence which produce it, therefore, the minds of saints, in the future world, will lose interest in the theme, and turn again to nature! Is it true, then, that the same law will not hold good in *both* kingdoms? That the *sameness* of operations and results in the *spiritual* domain of Christ's kingdom, will soon disenchant the mind and heart of the celestial beholder, and cause him to lose his interest and satisfaction in it? And yet, when you apply this same law to things *natural*, it ceases to have any force? For surely there is far more sameness, monotony, in *nature* than in the realm of *mind*. There is such a common type of expression, such fixed uniformity of laws and resultant effects throughout the kingdom of the natural, that it is scarcely to be wondered at, that men constantly beholding it, should come to ascribe the whole system, as many do, to "blind fate," to an "eternal necessity." Why, Hume's famous argument against miracles, was constructed on this very basis, viz., the *absolute uniformity* of all nature's laws! So that a miracle, an event out of the ordinary course of things, is contrary to nature, and therefore not admissible in human belief! And yet, here is a Christian philosopher, basing an argument for the superiority of nature over redemption, on the ground of immense and inexhaustible *dissimilarity* in the operations of the former!

And yet, amazing! not even such a wonderful dissimilarity exists in nature after all. For it is well known, that the principle of gravitation, for instance, is *universal*, reaching every world, and every distinct atom of matter in the universe. It is known also that two material substances cannot occupy the same space at the same time; and yet here are at least three distinct elements existing together in man himself,—soul, spirit and body. It is known likewise, that the animal, and even the vegetable creation, is conformed to certain *types* which dominate in the respective sphere of each, and are traceable through the vast cycles of duration. So that there is not so great a *variety* in nature, by a thousand fold, as at first appears. When you come to comprehend a few simple principles, called laws; to observe and understand certain phe-

nomena; and to study and master the science of types; you have the cosmos of the universe! One world, and one system of worlds, is really, so far as we know, the type of all the worlds and systems known to the modern astronomer. Why the very process of structure of the various worlds and planetary systems which are either complete or in a formative state, so far as astronomy and philosophy impart any light on the subject, is substantially the same. Hence the whole of Dick's argument falls to the ground. And it were not a difficult task to show that the very *reverse* of his conclusion is the true philosophy.

He leaves out of the argument entirely certain principles which are of the utmost importance to a full and correct comprehension of the matter. I have space to note only two or three of them.

His argument proceeds on the ground that the system of Redemption ceases as an active augmenting force, after the judgment. Whereas, it will then have only completed its first and formative period, on a limited theatre, and while in a state of sharp conflict with the kingdom of evil. But eternity is before it. It is exalted to heaven, on a grander theatre for action, and display. It takes supreme rank, in a world where "thrones, dominions, principalities and powers" are the chief features, and it will dominate the whole of them! Christ will put himself at the Head of this vast redeemed, and glorified Humanity, embracing in the same family relationship all holy angels; and He will lead them forth into the fields of higher attainments and blessedness, for ever and ever. We read, "There is no night there," and they need no sun, or moon, or stars, for "the Lamb is the light thereof." If such language mean any thing, it means that the light of *nature* will not be needed *there:* the light of the Cross will there be a perpetual effulgence, illumining every mind, and flooding the whole scene with a Divine radiance that shall satisfy, while it glorifies every soul, and fills it with everlasting peace and joy.

In the 19th Psalm, in the midst of a glowing description of the majesty and glory of God in nature, David suddenly

pauses, and abruptly exclaims: "The *law* of the Lord is *perfect*, converting the soul: the *testimony* of the Lord is *sure*, making *wise* the simple: the *statutes* of the Lord are *right*, rejoicing the heart: the *commandment* of the Lord is *pure* enlightening the eyes: the *fear* of the Lord is *clean*, enduring forever: the *judgments* of the Lord are *true and righteous altogether*." vs. 7–9. Thoughtful, wonderful language this, if you will take the trouble to analyze it. There was no "perfection" in nature, no "converting" power. Her testimony was not "sure," like that of the Word. It was not able to make men "wise" unto salvation. It did not purify from sin. It did not reconcile to God, and rejoice the heart. And so he turns to "the law and the testimony," and the commandment, and the statutes of the Lord, as the only really worthy objects of desire, the only essential conditions of life, and duty, and blessedness.

There is another element of grave significance which enters into this problem and which is seldom taken into account. The law of *change, instability, dissolution*, pervades the entire system of nature. This law is continually, and universally operative. Not only is it so, on a vast scale, in relation to worlds, and even system of worlds, in the universe, but it extends even to the minutest *atoms* which compose matter and enter into its various organic forms. They are all the while changing their relations and entering into new combinations. So rapid is this change, even in the human body, that it is computed that there is a *total* change in about seven years! And so in other organisms, animate and inanimate. We speak of the "everlasting hills," as a symbol of stability. But even they, though massive rock, crumble away or are rent in pieces and finally disappear. The entire face of nature has undergone changes, incredibly great and many, since the morning of creation. Human history is but a record of change and instability, in the affairs of nations and peoples, as well as of individual man. And what a graphic and affecting description have we in the 90th Psalm, of the vicissitudes and changes which *man* himself experiences in this transient state of existence.

And we know—it is not matter of conjecture—that this same law reaches even to the stars, and pervades the whole

stellar system! The theory concerning meteors and comets of a certain class is, that they are fragments of shattered worlds. Stars of vast magnitude have been known to disappear from the sidereal heavens—gone out in darkness impenetrable! gone down into eternal silence and forgetfulness! Where is the "lost Pleiades?" What astronomer can tell us? And we know that the very planet on which we dwell, is destined to a similar fate. And in the presence of such a law,—a law operative on every atom, and every world, and every system of stars throughout the immensity of space—a law which has already wrought changes and catastrophes, so countless in number, and on a scale so vast as almost to overpower the mind—in the presence of such a dread array of actualities and possibilities—oh! how assuring, how comforting, is the voice which comes down to us out of "the Excellent Glory," affirming that our *Redeem'r* is "the *same* yesterday, to-day, and forever," that "*His* kingdom is an *everlasting* kingdom;" that, "having loved His own which are in the world, he loveth them unto the *end;*" that "though the earth be removed, and the mountains be cast into the depths of the sea; yet his word endureth forever.' That even in the day when "the earth shall melt with fervent heat,' and there be "no place found for it any more," the kingdom of *love*, which Christ has set up in the hearts of his people, the kingdom of *grace*, perfected by the Spirit of God, the kingdom of *moral virtue and life*, evolved by the Cross out of a ruined humanity, and a sin-wrecked world, shall *survive* in all its parts, in all its completeness, and rise, resplendent in beauty, into the heavenly state, there to enter on a greatly enlarged sphere of activity and blessedness. What force and truth are there in the lines of Christian song:

> "But fixed for everlasting years,
> Unmoved amid the wreck of spheres,
> Thy *Word* shall shine in cloudless day,
> When heaven and earth shall pass away."

With such a perfected system of Divine wisdom, power and grace to study in the clear and serene light of eternity—a system that has not in it one principle of the transient, one principle of decay or dissolution, one principle of evil, in any form or degree; but, on the contrary, contains the highest and

divinest principles of expansion, of intellectual and moral growth in all that is ennobling and good; and with Christ himself to teach, to lead the way, to explain, to pour out continually the fullness of his love and grace and wisdom upon his own beloved—the saints in heaven will not need, in all the ages of eternity, to come down to nature for a theme sufficiently grand to sustain their interest and keep away *ennui*.

Redemption, therefore, we may safely conclude, is *exhaustless as a theme of study*, as *well as a fountain of blessedness*. I have but barely touched on this point in connection with the false philosophy of Dr. Dick; and had I space, a strong positive argument might be offered in support of this proposition, from the nature of things; from the admitted fact that moral forces are, in their very nature, more potent, and permanent, and glorious than merely physical laws, or mental phenomena, and that Redemption embodies the entire moral forces of the Godhead, and of the supernatural kingdom: from the fact that God, from all eternity, has been engaged on this favorite plan, and has put special honor upon it, and made sacrifices, personal and infinite, to advance it—pouring into it the "fullness" of his own nature, consecrating it with the benediction of his Fatherhood, concentrating upon it the energies of his omnipotent Spirit, and through countless ages of time, in the sight of angels, and we know not how many other orders of intelligences, he has been gathering into a kingdom that is to endure throughout eternity, the choicest fruits of his wisdom and grace. But passing by these I shall dismiss this interesting point by brief reference to the *experience and observation of the present state of being*.

We are not left without a witness even in this life. Earth and time furnish scope and opportunity sufficient to test the *tendencies* of moral ideas and forces. Thus we do not need to look *beyond* the present world to learn what the law of sin is, and what the law of holiness. "The wages of sin is death," by an inherent, inexorable, universal law; and we do not need that God should proclaim the fact, or for death to determine the future state of all who live and die under that law. And

equally so of moral goodness. "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace." Virtue is its own reward. Sin, and misery and death: holiness, and happiness and life, are inseparable—as really in the nature of things, as in the purpose of God. Experience and observation—broad as the race and through all the ages of time—have settled this fact beyond question. Now I affirm that the saints of God, in this life, have a real and blessed *foretaste* of the power of the kingdom of Christ, not only to *sustain* the new life, which it begets, but to intensify, and enlarge, and glorify it. I appeal to Christian *experience*. Does not the plan of Redemption *grow* upon us, as we contemplate it, study it, watch its developments, practice its duties, and experience its power, on our own minds and hearts? Does it not stand out in grander proportions as a system, take on wider relations, assume new and ever increasing interest, as we compare it with nature, contrast it with science, or philosophy, or the highest forms of human thought and achievement? Is there a solitary doctrine of it, a single aspect, or feature, or principle of it, that the acutest intellect can detect a flaw in, or the profoundest mind can exhaust or fully master? Is not one's relish for it the keener, his faith in it the stronger, his hold on the promises the firmer, his view the diviner, as he drinks deeper and deeper into the spirit of it, and receives more and more of its fullness? Other things being equal, is not the *maturest* Christain the most interested, the most intelligently convinced, the most thoroughly rooted in the divine life, and anxious to understand all mysteries, and to search into the "deep things of God," and know "the hidings of his power?" Is Christ ever so divinely glorious to him, heaven so real, the love of God so all-sufficient a factor in human experience, as when, like "Paul the aged," the time of his departure is at hand? All things earthly are passing into silence, and darkness. The only Presence seen in the chamber of the shadow of death, is a manifested Saviour; and with a bound, that has in it the concentrated force of long years of watching, and waiting and struggling "with foes within and foes without," the released, ransomed soul leaps upward into the glories of a life "which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into

the heart of man to conceive." If such an experience—an experience not rare even in this short and imperfect life—have any meaning, if it teach any "Philosophy of the Future State," if it point to any conclusion, it is this: That REDEMPTION, in its facts and doctrines, in its laws and forces, in its economies and dispensations, in its relations and applications, in its experiences and anticipations, will *never grow old*, never be exhausted, never fail to excite and satisfy the intensest longings of any soul, be he angel, or archangel, or man, made in the image of God.

Such a Theme as salvation by the cross of Christ ever be *exhausted!* As soon think of exhausting Infinity itself! Spanning the eternities in its History: taxing the Godhead to its utmost in its Sacrifice: outshining the stars and all nature in its Manifestations: embracing and binding together in "one" in its Relations, "all things" in heaven and in earth—all systems, economies, and dispensations, and harmonizing the universe and binding it into one great Family: invoking and pressing into its service all the moral Forces of God's kingdom, including the omnipotent Spirit: deriving its Warrant from the blood of Atonement shed on Calvary for the remission of sins: drawing to itself, as it advances along the track of centuries, the Ministries of angels and the co-operation of all loyal subjects: and proposing as its End an Everlasting Kingdom of Righteousness and Peace—it surely cannot fail, cannot disappoint the highest expectations, unless it be that the Eternal Mind himself shall fail of his purpose!

CHAPTER XII.

ANGELS LABOR TO COMPREHEND THE MYSTERY OF REDEMPTION.

The desire to know and understand the Mediatorial system more perfectly, implies, of course, more or less definiteness and fullness of knowledge on the subject. We know, to a certainty, that they are familiar with the Old Testament history of the covenants; with the amazing record of prophecy and promise, and their fulfillments in the past; and with the experiences of the "heirs of salvation," to whom they are "ministering spirits," and have been ever since the advent of the Messiah. It is reasonable to suppose, inasmuch as the kingdom of the "one Mediator" embraces all moral intelligences, and that all are related to it as subjects, and are under its laws, that angels, and all moral beings in all worlds, equally with men, have had *revelations* concerning the incarnation of the Divine Word or Logos in human nature, and the appearance of that transcendent Character on the theatre of earth, and the death on the cross of the God-man in order to propitiate Divine Justice, and make salvation possible to sinners.

By what means, other than those which God has employed from time to time to make known to *this* world the purposes of his grace, he has revealed Christ to other intelligences, we are not told. The Scriptures are silent on this point. But they more than imply, that "the Sun of Righteousness,' which has risen on our sin-darkened planet, extends his light and benign influence all over the moral universe. God may have a thousand methods unknown to us, to communicate to other worlds the amazing transactions which have occurred, and are yet to occur, in this, and which are of a character to make it the very centre of highest interest to the whole family of God. This world is among the smallest of the

planets—an insignificant atom in the kingdom of Nature—but by reason of its relations to Christ, and to his moral kingdom, it is the grandest, the most sacred, the most influential world, in the whole vast system of worlds. Christ has honored it as he has honored no other. He has sanctified it with a baptism of blood that will make it forever precious in his eyes. He has enacted wonders of grace and love here, sufficient in number and degree to give this world peculiar prominence and interest in the future state. Man, although made lower than the angels, he has here exalted above all other races and orders of creatures, by taking him into mysterious union with His own nature, and by reconciling him, though a sinner, to himself, by means of an atonement made in his behalf by his death upon the cross. He has here introduced a new and radical principle into his government—the remedial agency of the gospel scheme—and under this plan, and by means of it, he is working out a system of moral government that shall endure forever, and extend its sway over all holy beings.

"*Which things*," says the Apostle Peter, "*the angels desire to look into.*" 1 Peter 1: 12. The Bible records the interesting fact, that angels were often sent on divine errands to the saints under the former dispensation: they bore messages of promise to them, and often declared the purpose of God. They were sent to announce the birth of the forerunner of Christ; and finally the birth of Jesus himself, and to sing over his cradle the gladdest song that earth ever heard. And there is abundant reason for the opinion, that the entire career of Jesus, from the moment he left the throne of the heavenly glory, down through that mysterious and unparalleled humiliation, and along the course of his wondrous life in the flesh, even to the cross, and the ascension into glory,—" was seen of angels." They were spectators of his public entrance into heaven; after having spoiled principalities and powers He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. And inasmuch as there "is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth," their knowledge of what is daily going on here must extend to all the details of Christ's kingdom. And the constant study of the subject; faithful

watching, and searching inquiry, on their part, are essential, that they may intelligently and effectively "minister to them who are the heirs of salvation."

Peter does not speak in a vague or general way. He specifies particularly several of the things which they "desire to look into." These things all relate intimately to the work of Redemption. There is not a hint that they feel the least interest in what pertains to the natural kingdom of earth; its scenery, its history, its institutions, its conflicts, save so far as they bear on Christ's kingdom. But we are directly and positively assured, that they do watch with intensest solicitude "the growing empire of our King," and are anxious to know and understand, more and more, of its significance. The apostle instances the sovereignty of divine grace, the inquiries of ancient prophets, the sufferings and glory of Christ as Mediator, the preaching of the gospel and the conversion of sinners by means of it, and the work of the Holy Spirit in the salvation of men, as *among* the things of angelic interest and study. The verb in the original, which the translators have rendered "look into," is far more expressive. It denotes the *intensest gaze*, the most *eager and fixed desire*. The omission of the article before angels also, is noteworthy. Not any one order of angels, particularly, but *all* orders, the entire body of celestial beings, are here represented as searching into these things with an all-penetrating gaze, and pondering their meaning and significance in their hearts. And this attitude of angelic minds towards the things of the kingdom, was symbolized in the Jewish temple by the two cherubim placed in the inner tabernacle, with their faces turned down toward the mercy seat, which was the symbol of Christ's mediation and sacrifice, as if they comprehended its wonderful significance, or were anxious that mankind should.

God manifest in the flesh, and dwelling among men, is the first in the series of those wonderful events connected with the Cross, into which angels are anxious to look. The Divine Son of God, incarnated in the flesh, is, beyond all question, the most mysterious and perplexing, as well as significant event which has ever transpired in the universe. It was altogether

different in character and purpose from anything ever before manifested. It presented the Godhead to his creatures in relations entirely new, and profoundly interesting. It suggested new relations between God and his creatures; a new system of moral government; the existence of perfections and elements in the Divine character never before known to exist there; and possibilities in relation to the eternal future infinitely grand and affecting. No wonder the attention of angels was arrested, and their interest intensified by this manifestation. It is a "mystery" to them, incomprehensible, and yet glorious, as much as it is to us. Here is condescension, humiliation, love, on the part of God, which they can never measure; "unsearchable riches" of wisdom and grace, which they can never exhaust. They see enough, however, of the Divine character, and the divine purpose, displayed in it, to excite their exalted minds to the highest pitch, and turn their eager gaze upon it, that they may discover more and more of its hidden depths, and trace "the hidings of God's power."

We have become so familiar with this doctrine; our hearts are naturally so dull; we see things heavenly only as through a glass darkly; and we really have so little true sympathy with Christ, in his great atoning and redeeming work, and our conceptions, at best, are so mean and earthly, that we fail to see and appreciate the stupendous significance of this event. But not so with *angels*. Their minds can take in a grander view; and their hearts are more susceptible to profound impressions from it. They were quick to discover the new and more glorious fields of thought and contemplation opened up to view in the incarnation scene, and were intent to learn the great lessons which God meant to teach his moral creatures by it. They were *already* familiar with sin, and with its punishment. They had seen heaven desolated by a whirlwind of rebellion; and seen the "devil and his angels" cast out in quick and terrible punishment. But here was a new order of things. Here God comes down to his creatures, even to the lowest order, in a character totally new, in a person uniting the Divine with the Human, and talks with man, and tabernacles for more than thirty years with man, and teaches doctrines as new as they are sublime and wonderful—the doctrine of a justifying right-

eousness through faith in Christ, and the doctrine of a new "life hid with Christ in God"—and finally dies for man on the cross, "the just for the unjust;" and three days after he rises from the dead, and ascends again to his throne in heaven, leading captives in his train sin, and death, and the grave, and the powers of darkness! They had a revelation in this one scene which far surpassed all former manifestations of Deity. There was a sacred light in this Sun of Righteousness which gilded the very stars of the firmament with new lustre, and awakened harmonies, sweeter and grander than any "music of the spheres," or the cadences of heavenly song. It gave them a startling view of the enormity of sin, which rendered such a sacrifice necessary to its pardon; of the utter and hopeless ruin of the race of mankind, which called for such an interposition; of the worth of the human soul, even in its debasement, which warranted such a price for its ransom.

Take in if you can, the scene as presented to angelic minds. They had seen the Mediator in his proper person on the Throne of the heavenly glory. To Him they had paid their homage. At his hands they had received their crowns, made brilliant and sure to them by his electing grace. Whether there were foreshadowings of the incarnation before the event, other than those made to man, we know not. But now "the fullness of time has come," and the divine Son of God descends to earth, and appears here in the likeness of Adam, the head of a fallen race. He comes with no sceptre in his hands; not in regal state, but in great poverty and obscurity. Here he is not a king, but "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;" "the carpenter's son;" the despised "Nazarene," and has "not where to lay his head." Here he is "numbered with transgressors;" is assailed by the Devil, is maligned, mocked, crowned with thorns, and finally put to death. What a contrast! What a scene for the contemplation and study of angels! They were watching and waiting for the event, as appears from the narrative.

Gabriel had made known to Elizabeth, a few months before, the coming of Christ's forerunner; and at a later period to Mary, her cousin, the future birth of the Saviour Jesus. And on this memorable night, while Jerusalem and all Judea

were wrapped in slumber, behold the Bridegroom suddenly appeared in the form of the infant Jesus. And the same angel who had borne the messages to Elizabeth and Mary, now hastens to the shepherds of Bethlehem, who were hard by watching their flocks by night, and made to them the most important and glorious announcement which these heavens ever echoed, or angel lips ever spake: "Fear not; for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." And, suddenly, the firmament was peopled with a multitude of angels, who, responding to their leader's words, shout: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace and good will to men!"

Can such a scene ever fade out of the minds of angels? Can they ever lose their interest in it? Can they ever know enough of it, or fully compass its significance? As its full meaning, and wondrous efficacy come more and more into view in the unfoldings of the infinite plan of Mediation in the successive generations of mankind, must not their wonder, and their interest, and their anxiety to know more, and to understand better, the great "mystery of godliness," increase? They see it in new aspects, new relations, new forms of moral beauty and grandeur, continually; and so will it be to the end of time, and all through eternity. It is a topic that can never grow old, or be exhausted.

The Life of Christ is another subject of wonder and study to angels. Such a character never appeared before in history. It stands out in bold and majestic outline, surpassing, in every feature and aspect of it, whether you view it from the moral, or the spiritual, or the intellectual side—in contrast with the most renowned characters in history, or by itself in the perfectness, and exaltation of its being, surpassing not only the actualities of life, but the loftiest ideals, the grandest conceptions, ever formed by man in any age of the world. The gods of heathen mythology fall immeasurably below him. The dreams of poets, the reveries of philosophers, the aspirations of the schoolmen, and the rhapsodies of prophets and seers, never begot a character to compare with the simple Jesus of Nazareth. All the

learning, all the wisdom, all the teaching of the centuries, are but dross, foolishness, contrasted with the words which fell from His lips; and in a way so natural, so forcible, so divinely fitting, as to prove that he "spake as one having authority, and not as the Scribes and Pharisees" of his nation. No teacher, no public character, ever had a humbler origin; ever had less in his circumstances and surroundings, to make him great or conspicuous; and yet no mission was ever so bold, so lofty in its claims, or shed such lustre on his name and on his race, or so revolutionized and vitalized human thought and human society. If we could gather together in *one*, all the virtues, all the graces, all the moral goodness, there was on earth at the time Jesus lived in it, that one character would not equal in perfection and grandeur the one simple character, so artlessly and yet so fittingly and grandly sketched in the four gospels. That *Childhood* of Jesus! Did ever a fond mother, even in the hallowed visions of the night, picture for the boy of her ardent love, such a perfect conception! Is it any wonder, that he was an awe-inspiring, and mysterious Presence to his mother, even in his boyhood days; and that his strange words, as when at twelve he said, on returning from Jerusalem, where he had conversed with the learned doctors of the temple, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" should be pondered by her, and laid up in her heart? And that childhood was but the flower which, in its matured fruit, yielded a harvest of Divine wisdom, and grace, and power, and goodness, such as never before enriched the world.

Angels are *familiar* with that wondrous life; every step of it, every event in it, every incident which marked it, every act which characterized it, every virtue which shone in it, every word uttered by it, every suffering endured, every indignity offered it, every sorrow felt in it, and all the wealth of tenderness, and love, and pity, and blessing, it poured out upon an ungrateful and wicked world. They were personal *witnesses* of it all. They took it all in, in detail, as well as a whole. They were moved to the depths of their being in view of it all. They felt the profoundest sympathy with Jesus, in his mission of mercy and suffering. They themselves often ministered to him in the hours of his greatest need, as in the temptation,

and in the garden of agony, and doubtless in the supreme hour, as he hung upon the cross.

The Life of Jesus confounds infidelity itself.

"When has the world seen a phenomenon like this; a lonely, uninstructed youth, coming forth amid the moral darkness of Galilee, even more distinct from his age, and from everything around him, than a Plato would be rising up alone in some wild tribe in Oregon, assuming thus a position at the head of the world, and maintaining it for eighteen centuries, by the pure self-evidence of his life and doctrine!" *

The same writer, in the most masterly sketch of the life of Jesus probably ever drawn by an uninspired pen, thus sums up some of the principal distinctions of his superhuman character, pp. 321–2:

"We have seen him unfolding as a flower, from the germ of a perfect youth; growing up to enter into great scenes and have his part in great trials; harmonious in all with himself and truth, a miracle of celestial beauty. He is a Lamb in innocence, a God in dignity; revealing an impenitent but faultless faith, such as no mortal ever attempted, such as, to the highest of mortals, is inherently impossible. He advances the most extravagant pretensions, without any show of conceit, or even seeming fault of modesty. He suffers without affectation of composure and without restraint of pride, suffers as no mortal sensibility can, and where, to mortal view, there was no reason for pain at all: giving us not only an example of gentleness and patience in all the small trials of life, but revealing the depths even of the passive virtues of God, in his agony and the patience of his suffering love. He undertakes also a plan, universal in extent, perpetual in time; viz., to unite all nations in a kingdom of righteousness under God; laying his foundations in the hearts of the poor, as no great teacher had ever done before, and yet without creating ever a faction, or stirring one partisan feeling in his followers. In his teachings he is perfectly original, distinct from his age, and from all ages; never warped by the expectations of his friends; always in a balance of truth, swayed by no excesses, running to no oppositions or extremes; clear of all superstition, and equally clear of all liberalism; presenting the highest doctrines in the lowest and simplest forms; establishing a pure, universal morality, never before established; and with all his intense devotion to the truth, never anxious, perceptibly, for the success of

* Nature and the Supernatural. By Horace Bushnell. p. 318.

his doctrine. Finally, to sum up all in one, he grows more great, and sacred, the more he is known—needs, in fact, to be known, to have his perfection seen. And this we say is Jesus, the Christ; manifestly not human, not of our world—some being who has burst into it, and is not of it. Call him for the present, that 'holy thing,' and say, 'by this we believe that thou camest forth from God.'" pp. 321, 322.

Rosseau eulogizes the character of Jesus as transcendently superior to any other ever conceived of, absolutely faultless; the highest ideal ever formed. Strauss, and Rénan, also, the very apostles of naturalism, confess substantially the same. And Theodore Parker says of him that—

"He unites in himself the sublimest precepts and divinest practices, thus realizing the dream of prophets and sages; rises free from all prejudices of his age, nation, or sect; gives free range to the spirit of God in his breast; sets aside the law sacred and true—honored as it was, its forms, its sacrifice, its temple, its priests; puts away the doctors of the law, subtle, irrefragable, and pours out a doctrine beautiful as the light, sublime as Heaven, and true as God. . . . Eighteen centuries have passed since the Sun of humanity rose so high in Jesus: what man, what sect, has mastered his thought, comprehended his method, and so fully applied it to life?"*

Notwithstanding the length of the extracts I have already made from Dr. Bushnell's great work, I must make one more. It is, alike in thought, and in eloquence of expression, one of the most remarkable passages in a book of extraordinary ability, and special adaptedness to the times:

"This one perfect character has come into our world, and lived in it; filling all the molds of action, all the terms of duty and love, with his own divine manners, works, and charities. All the conditions of our life are raised us, by the meaning he has shown to be in them, and the grace he has put upon them. The world itself is changed, and is no more the same that it was; it has never been the same since Jesus left it. The air is charged with heavenly odors, and a kind of celestial consciousness, a sense of other worlds, is wafted on us in its breath. Let the dark ages come, let society roll backward and churches perish in whole regions of the earth, let infidelity deny, and, what is worse, let spurious piety dishonor the truth; still there is something here that was not, and a something

*Discourses of Religion, pp 294, 303.

that has immortality in it. Still our confidence remains unshaken, that Christ and his all-quickening life are in the world, as fixed elements, and will be to the end of time; for Christianity is not so much the advent of a better doctrine, as of a perfect character, once entered into life and history; and how can a perfect character, once entered into life and history, be separated and finally expelled? It were easier to untwist all the beams of light in the sky, separating and expunging one of the colors, than to get the character of Jesus, which is the real gospel, out of the world. Look ye hither, meantime, all ye blinded and fallen of mankind, a better nature is among you, a pure heart, out of some pure world, is come into your prison, and walks it with you. Do you require of us to show who he is, and definitely to expound his person? We may not be able. Enough to know that he is not of us—some strange being out of nature and above it, whose name is Wonderful. Enough that sin has never touched his hallowed nature, and that he is a friend. In him dawns a hope—purity has not come into our world, except to purify. Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world! Light breaks in, peace settles on the air, lo! the prison walls are giving way—rise, let us go." pp. 331, 332.

The *doctrines* of the Christian system form another subject of special interest to angels. The Scriptures leave no room for doubt that they have an insight into these; understand the ground on which pardon is granted to sinful men under the Gospel; the principles which underlie the kingdom of Christ in the world; the necessity of the new birth, and the agency of the Spirit of God in causing it; the terrible power of sin in the human heart, and the hostility of Satan, and the subtlety and power of his agency over man. All these things are known to angels. They have studied them long; studied them in the light of prophecy, and of their fulfillment; in the light of Scripture testimony, and providential dispensations. And the more they have studied, and comprehended them, and marked the truth and efficacy of them, in bringing sinners to Christ, and in begetting in them his own divine likeness, the more wonderful and glorious do the doctrines of salvation appear to their clear, pure minds. They see no obscurity in them. They never question their divine origin and authority. They never carp about them, or speculate over them, or dogmatize with them, or give them only a half-hearted credence, as is so often done by those who profess to believe them.

What can surprise and grieve them more than the *unbelief* of the world, with such doctrines shining out from the sacred page, and from the life of Christ, as matter of history, in such fullness, and steadiness, and certainty! What can astonish them more, than the weakness of our faith, the little interest we manifest in truths of such tremendous import, the little practical effect they have upon us! No language can do justice to *their* feelings, as they see multitudes, under all the discoveries of divine revelation, and with the character of Christ in the world as a super-human testimony, and the agency of the Holy Spirit to convince and convert them, living, and dying, and passing up to the judgment, ignorant of the way of salvation, despisers of the glorious gospel of the blessed God. We can imagine them, in their perplexity and amazement over such a scene, taking up the gospel record, and searching it anew, to find, if possible, some explanation for conduct so strange and unreasonable. But the *more* they look, and search, and ponder, and inquire, the *more* luminous, divine and all-sufficient, does the record seem; and the more inexcusable and damning the guilt of those who reject it against themselves, and perish miserably in their sins, in spite of all God's interpositions and sacrifices to prevent it.

The Gospel Promises furnish a rich theme for the study of angels. They have had much to do in making known these promises, from time to time, to God's people; and they have undoubtedly watched for, and marked their accomplishment. The general promise which immediately succeeded the catastrophe of Eden, when they had looked for an outburst of God's anger such as had befallen sinning angels, must have greatly excited their interest. For the first time they had intimations that *sin could be forgiven.* Through the darkness of that dreadful hour shone the first ray of light that ever fell on the pathway of transgression. They have watched the unfoldings of that original promise, as it has come down through the ages, under the patriarchal, and Mosaic dispensations—renewed, and enlarged to Abraham, and set forth in types, and sacrifices, and ordinances, until the great Archetype came and gave a new and still more glorious meaning and expression

to it. Eighteen hundred years under the new dispensation, have only served to add to the *significance* of that *first* promise of redeeming grace, and to invest it with ever growing interest and delight in the minds of angels. And that same promise will not receive its full verification and completion, until that "old serpent, the Devil," is finally crushed under the heel of the Divine-man in the day of judgment.

So the history of *each particular promise* that God has made to man in the gospel—and how many and varied they are!—is a history replete with wonder, and interest, and instruction, equally to angels and to men. A promise is a *pledge*, and in many instances God has "confirmed the promise by an oath," that he will perform it. Many of these promises were made thousands of years before the time named for their fulfillment. Some of them were of a character that rendered their accomplishment, not only improbable in the eye of human reason but absolutely impossible; and scoffers scoffed at them, and infidels derided them, as in the instance of *Noah*, when called to build an ark for the salvation of himself and household from the flood that should destroy the world. Hence angels were ever on the alert; watchful and diligent observers, noting the signs of the times, in every age of the world's history, and the relations of occurring events in Providence to these divine pledges: noting their redemption from time to time, and the unfailing faithfulness of God in "keeping covenant" with his people. Full many a promise have they already seen fully accomplished signally, all those which related to the incarnation, the life, the passion, the crucifixion, and the resurrection, of the Saviour of the world. And all these glorious fulfillments, are only pledges, foretastes, "the first fruits," of greater, and grander achievements in the future of the Church on earth, and in the future of Christ's kingdom in heaven.

Not a promise has ever failed! Not a word in the "covenant" but that has been made good. Often the time of waiting was long: the night was dark: it almost seemed as if God had "forgotten his promise," and that "the powers of darkness" would prevail against the saints of the Most High! But lo! in the darkest hour a streak of light suddenly flashed athwart the eastern sky—harbinger of the morning-star, the

approach of deliverance, the hour of "the fullness of time," fixed way back in a past eternity, and now come. How many such glad *surprises* have angels experienced during six thousand years of the Church's history! And they are all the while occurring. And "signs in the heavens," and movements in the earth, and the marshalling of forces, such as never before in the history of our world, came together in the shock and tumult of fierce encounter, indicate, beyond all doubt, that the hour "draws nigh," when the Divine veracity, the power of the supernatural forces of Christianity, and the truth of long-standing prophecies, and the expectations of the saints, built on the Word and Providence of their ascended King, will be subjected to new tests—tests terribly severe, and on a scale surpassing anything ever experienced before in human history. And however small may be *our* interest in this impending struggle of Good and Evil for the final mastery of man: however feeble may be *our* conceptions of its importance, and nearness, and reality; and however slight may be *our* preparation to act well our part in the fight, and bear our full share of responsibility in determining the mighty issues; of one thing we may be sure. *Angels* are not asleep, nor indifferent, nor unprepared, as they watch and mark the signs of the coming final struggle—"the hour," for which the world has been preparing, through thousands of years of discipline and waiting—"the hour" toward which converge, as to a focal point, so many predictions, of the olden Scripture, and which is to fulfill so many and "exceeding great and precious promises." With hearts expectant, with faith assured by the victories and fullfillments of the past, with their armor on and burnished for the fight, they stand ready, "an army with banners," "Salvation's army," in very deed, to execute their high commission, "as ministering spirits" to those who are to bear the burden of this mighty warfare.

What if "the sacramental host of God's elect" should prove recreant to duty in such a crisis of the world's history! What if the glorious anticipations of angels are changed into dismay and grief; not because of any failure on God's part, or any inherent deficiency in Christianity, but simply and only because those who had pledged their faith and service to Christ

failed Him in the day of decisive battle! either proving apostates from "the faith once delivered to the saints;" or going into the fight with a faint heart, and not sufficiently disciplined: or using, in the tremendous conflict with the evil forces of the day, "carnal weapons," and not "the sword of the Spirit;" science, philosophy, culture, worldly wisdom, and not the Word of God!

The scene of the crucifixion is a perpetual study to angels. All that immediately preceded it – the last supper in that upper chamber where Jesus held familiar intercourse with his chosen disciples; the agony of the garden, when his "soul was exceeding sorrowful even unto death": the arrest, and mock trial before Pilate and Herod: the intervening hours, when he was crowned with thorns, and arrayed in purple, and spit upon, and buffeted, and when the rabble shouted, "Crucify him, crucify him; not this man but Barabbas;" and, finally, when his cross was put upon him, and he was led out of the gate of the city to Golgotha,—all these transactions were witnessed by angels, who compassed the blessed Redeemer's path at every step during those wonderful days, and, so far as they were permitted, ministered to him, as they did in the garden. And what an impression they made on their minds! What sacred and affecting memories cluster around those scenes! How amazingly grand did the character of Jesus appear to them under such tests, amid such sufferings! And, finally, the hour of crucifixion came. Nails driven through his hands and feet affixed him to the cross, and that cross was planted on Calvary, with the Son of God dying upon it, amidst the cruel indignities of Roman soldiery, and the derisions of a Jewish mob. They saw it all—the shame, the suffering, the humiliation of that hour: the strange darkness which came over the world, the rending of tombs, the rent vail of the temple, the earthquake, and they heard that wail of anguish, "*Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani,*" and the patient but triumphant utterance of the divine sufferer, "It is finished!" If angels ever *weep*, we may well believe they wept then. If they ever despaired of the world, after the promise made to Adam in Eden, we may believe that hour witnessed it. The Saviour of the world dead!

his lifeless form hanging there on a piece of wood, between two thieves, and his few obscure and faithless disciples afraid to show themselves!

But mark the days which followed! An angel descended and rolled away the stone from the door of the sepulchre, in which they had laid his dead body, and sat there within, ready to announce his RESURRECTION to "the women who were first at the sepulchre." And what wonderful scenes of interest followed in quick succession, during the intervening forty days, until from Mount Bethany they saw a cloud receive the form of the risen Saviour and take him up into heaven.

The scene of the crucifixion has lost none of its interest, none of its significance, in the eyes of angels, since the day that Jesus was "lifted up" on Calvary, that he might "draw all men unto him." Indeed the full meaning of that sacrifice, is made apparent more and more as the ages roll by, and "the hidings of God's power" in it are brought to light, in the enlightenment and moral regeneration of the world. They saw a power in that super-human character, and that death on the cross, sufficient, in the hands of a few men, like Paul, and Peter, and John, and Barnabas, to overthrow the enthroned superstitions, and iniquities, and false philosophies, and civilizations of the world, and change the tide of human history. They have seen the simple "story of the cross," as it has gone the round of the nations—among savages and civilized, the cultured and the unlearned, the peasant and the king, in city and country—work miracles of grace, on minds, on hearts, on lives, on society, and on individuals—miracles surpassing all that prophet or seer ever dreamed of—miracles of moral changes, transformations, revolutions, achievements, greater than ever fiction or fable conceived of.

And now, *to-day*, after eighteen centuries of conflict, and changes, and vicissitudes in human affairs, the CROSS stands out before the eye of the world as the *only* Living, All-comprehending Power in it—the centre and the source of all progressive and regenerating influences—the one Star to guide its thought, its energy, its destiny—the only "wisdom" that

can solve the awful problems of moral existence—the one Attraction that is drawing to itself the best aspirations, the noblest virtues, the divinest gifts, and all the consecrated genius and worth of man.

Seeing, knowing, comprehending, all this, angels never tire of the theme, as we are apt to do. They never turn aside to seek new and fresher fields of contemplation. They are *always* intensely interested, and edified, and anxious to learn more of these things, and feel more and more the power of them on their own existences. It is not *curiosity* that so draws them to this study, and makes it so absorbing a study to them. It is for a moral and practical end. A *moral* end, because they are made wiser and better by reason of these things. They grow in holiness under such a discipline. A *practical* end, because it is the best possible training for the exercise of their peculiar ministry in behalf of the saints. The better they comprehend the entire scheme of grace, the better will they be fitted for their own exalted service in the economy of Christ. The more they know of man, especially his spiritual needs and character; and the better they understand the methods of grace, and the amplitude of its provision, and the efficacy of atoning blood, and the work of the Spirit on the heart of man, the better adapted will they be for their work, and the more efficient in its performance. And the more they contemplate the wonders of Redeeming love, as brought to light in human experience, and human history, the more profoundly is their gratitude excited. Seeing what it costs, in the way of sacrifice and effort, to save a lost sinner, to lift him up out of the mire and filth of sin, and new create him by the Spirit of God, they cannot fail to see new reasons for *gratitude* that, through the sovereign grace of God, they have been kept from falling, and made to persevere even unto the end.

There is a practical thought suggested, just here, which we do well to ponder. *We* have, as the special objects and subjects of Redeeming grace, even a deeper interest in these things, into which "angels desire to look," than *they* have. Their interest arises from the character, and the worth of the

salvation wrought out in and by means of the remedial system, of which Christ is the head and administrator. That scheme does not involve their personal redemption, inasmuch as they have never fallen. Still are they intimately related to it; their destiny is involved in it; they are infinite debtors to it; they are to be members of the same family with the saints in glory. But *we* have an interest in it deeper, profounder, more radical, and sacred still. For us Christ suffered and died. For us he tabernacled in the flesh; made the world luminous with his character; taught lessons of doctrine and life such as were never taught even to angels; and when he left the world, after baptizing it with his love and blood, he sent his Spirit down into it, to carry on the work of saving men through the efficacy of his death. To *us* Christianity is a matter of *life* or *death:* life everlasting in glory and blessedness; or death eternal under a fearfully aggravated condemnation. And there is no possible escape for us. We can make no compromise. We must be saved, if saved at all, solely by virtue of what Christ is, and has done for us. And if *not saved*, we are not simply lost; our guilt is enhanced beyond the power of computation; and our eternity will be correspondingly miserable and dreadful.

This fearful *responsibility* is upon us. It is put there by Christ himself. It arises from the very nature of the case. And everything in the gospel, everything in life, and in death, emphasizes it. It is upon *every* man, whatever his station, or character, or circumstances, or beliefs, or unbelief; and no man can shake it off, or impair it in the least degree. "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned!" Awful words! But they are the words of Eternal Truth. They fell from the same lips that will pronounce sentence in the last day, on every man, and on every angel, and on every devil. Think not that there is any deception, any trifling here, with these tremendous verities of existence. Think not that your *unbelief*, with such a revelation in your hand, with such a character in human history, and with the omnipotent Spirit to apply the truth, and cleanse and new-create the soul, — will avail you aught. That very unbelief will condemn you, as the light of the sun, shining in the

clearness and splendor of noonday, condemns the man who gropes in the dark. And what of your *indifference*, your neglect of these things, your preference of everything else to them, your unregenerate heart, and disobedient life, your prayerlessness, and ungodliness,—what of all these things, as viewed in the light of the cross, in the light of the judgment day, in the light of angelic interest in the matters pertaining to your salvation? See you no reason for anxiety? No ground for self-accusation? No basis for the thunders and lightnings of God's wrath, who, we are taught, "is a consuming fire to them who are out of Christ?" Living, and dying, in a state of impenitence for sin, unregenerate in your moral nature, having no personal lot in the only Saviour of men—see you any hope for yourself in the vast future of existence? Is there any voice in nature, any voice in revelation, any voice in Providence, any voice from any prophet, or seer, or world, to assure you of a glorious death, and a blest eternity?

CHAPTER XIII.

THE JOY OF ANGELS OVER THE PROGRESS OF CHRISTIANITY.

The law of mutual dependence and influence in the moral world, like the law of gravitation in the physical, is universal. It extends to every creature, and to every world and system in the kingdom of intelligences. It is an impossibility for a son of God to *isolate* himself from all other intelligences, to sunder the social ties which bind him to his fellows and assume an independent position—a position in which he will not be acted upon by others, and will not himself exert an influence over others—in which he can "live to himself," and escape all responsibility for the conduct of others; all accountability for the effects of his example, and sentiments, and life, on the character and destiny of other men. So stringent, universal, and persistent, is this law of social influence, that revelation affirms that no man even "*dieth* to himself!" He writes and executes a moral "will and testament," and hands it down to posterity as his legacy, for generations, aye and to the end of the world. So that the manner of his *living*, and the manner of his *dying*, is an element which enters into human character, and human history. "Being dead he yet speaketh," though, like righteous Abel, he may have slumbered in the grave for thousands of years.

There is something profoundly impressive and solemn in this fact in relation to the *social* side of our existence. I am a distinct, complete, responsible existence; as truly so as if I were the *only* moral being in existence, and amenable directly to God. And at the same time, I am only one of countless myriads, all having the same source, all created with susceptibilities, and elements that necessitate their receiving and giving forth impressions on the entire mass of being. I

cannot escape contact, at a thousand points, with the life around me. And, in turn, I cannot avoid projecting my life, my influence, into the entire wide circle of existence in which I move and have my being. Not only am I thus, in the very constitution of my being, related to every other being, and responsible to society for the character of the influence that goes out to them from me, but by virtue of a common relation to God, the Creator, Lawgiver, and Saviour of the world, I have special claims upon society, and society has special claims upon me, and God will hold each to a strict account. In this respect, we are "fearfully and wonderfully made," and moral existence is a tremendous trust.

It is not surprising, therefore, to learn, as we do in Scripture, that this world is exerting a decided influence on the heavenly world: that the conduct of mankind, under the Gospel, sends forth an influence so wide, so powerful, and of such a character, as greatly to affect the minds, and excite the emotions of angelic beings on high. This is not conjecture, or assumption. We have the clear and positive testimony of Scripture in the words of Jesus himself: "I say unto you that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance." Luke 15: 7. We are here set forth as a "spectacle" to angels. Life to us, in this world of probation and mercy, is a "race"—a race in which we "run," not for the reward of a fading crown, but the crown immortal. A "cloud of witnesses" attend us at every step of the "course," and watch us, day by day, with intensest solicitude, and do all in their power to animate and quicken us, and bring us to the goal, that they may rejoice over the victor in the world above. So momentous is the matter of our salvation, in their estimation; so essential to life is repentance for sin, and of such worth is the human soul, that the conversion, the turning to God, of a single sinner, sends a thrill of sacred joy through all the angelic hosts.

The form in which Christ states this interesting fact, is noteworthy: "more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance." This implies that the salvation of a soul, *lost* to God and to virtue, is the occasion of greater

joy in heaven than the *continued obedience* of many who have never fallen. And this principle is illustrated, by the Saviour, in various parables, such as the lost sheep, and the lost piece of money. The *truth* of the principle is matter of human *experience.* The heart attaches a higher value to a thing once lost, or in imminent peril, than when it is quietly possessed, and no danger threatens. At least the *recovery* of a lost treasure—be it money, health, or reputation, or deliverance from a seen peril—takes stronger hold of the feelings than the quiet and continued enjoyment of good. A lost friendship restored: a disrupted tie rejoined: a child recovered that had been given up: a property possessed that had been alienated—how peculiar and sacred the joy!

Even God himself seems not above this feeling. His infinite heart seems more moved over the work of redemption which is going on in this world—the recovery to holiness of the apostate sons of Adam—than by the contemplation of the fixed and unalloyed happiness of heaven. While the angels feel a peculiar joy, as one after another of beings, "dead in trespasses and in sin," are touched by the power of grace, and new-created in the image of Christ; a joy which was never awakened in their hearts by the unbroken onward flow of the heavenly life. The fall of man, and the means necessary to his recovery: the infinite peril to which sin exposes him, and his rescue by an almighty arm—give them profounder views, in relation to sin, the law of God, the value of holiness, and the peril of damnation, than ever possessed them before. *We* are so prone to doubt, and to speculate, that our conceptions of man's condition and prospects, while in a state of impenitent sin, fall greatly below the reality. But angels, with their clear and unbiased vision, see that man, every man, at his best estate, is LOST! That one word expresses the fearful truth. *Lost* to God, to himself, to the family in heaven, to all the ends of rational being. And they know what is embraced in that loss—the happiness that is sacrificed, and the ruin that is inevitable.

Another principle which explains our Saviour's declaration, is this: An event of little significance in itself, may, because of its essential relation to other events and things, come to wear an aspect of superlative interest, and be really of the

utmost importance. Little things or events often become of greatest magnitude, under this law of relations. So it is in this case. It is in itself a small, seemingly a trifling affair, for a man to be sorry for his sins, "after a godly sort," and turn from them to virtue. But small as the event may seem, and natural and proper as it certainly is, and attended and followed by so little to attract observation, or change the outward course of events, it is nevertheless a change really greater, more radical, more influential, having wrapped up in it more elements of power and life, than any *other act or event* which it is in the power of man to accomplish. It is an event, so wide in the extent of its relations and influences, as to touch the very *heavens*, and thrill *angelic* hearts with joy. An event so radical in its character as to change the whole current of a man's existence, and roll back the mighty tide of evil and guilt which compassed him, and create a new and glorious destiny for him. Well therefore may there be "joy in the presence of the angels of God," over a sinner, weeping because of his sins, and fleeing "to lay hold on the hope set before him in the gospel." That event is not an *isolated* event: it stands related to a stupendous *system*. Its antecedents reach back into a past eternity, and its consequents take hold on the eternity to come. It is related to the Cross. It is a proof of the efficacy of the Gospel. It is a pledge of the final triumph of Christianity. It adds another soul to the number of the saved. It brings into fresh view the whole redemptive scheme.

The continued obedience of angels of course secures their own happiness. But it has no such influence on the minds and destinies of other intelligences, or on the character and history of God's moral kingdom, as the recovery to virtue and to life, under and by virtue of the plan of grace, of a soul sunk in the mire and filth of sin, and given over to perdition. So the fall and punishment of the angels, who revolted against the authority of Jesus Christ, will exert no influence on the universe at all comparable with that which will be produced by the saving of sinners under the gospel. *That* was a gigantic event—gigantic in magnitude, and gigantic in guilt. But it stands out to view as an *isolated* event, tremendous in its

proportions, and tremendous in its overthrow—as if the Alps had been rent in pieces by some sudden upheavel of nature, and cast into the sea! Or, as if a fearful cyclone should sweep down over the fairest regions of the earth, uprooting forests, sweeping away the habitations of men, and leveling mountains, in its wild fury, all along its wide pathway. But it did not change the course of the divine government, in its purpose, or spirit or providence. It was preceded by no revelations, no preparations. It was followed by no atoning sacrifice, no remedial scheme to repair its fearful wastes. It called forth no Saviour to interpose his body and blood to save them from hell. The law was simply left to take its course. The thrones of heaven were left without their occupants. There was no anxiety manifest in the counsels of eternity. The mighty chasm was made, and left as a fixed fact. "Lucifer, son of the morning, fell like lightning from heaven," and the affairs of the universe moved on as if nothing had happened.

But how different when *man* rebelled! When Eternal Love interposed! When the Father came forth from the bosom of eternity, and in the accents of Fatherhood, exclaimed, "I have found a ransom, deliver him from going down to death." And Incarnate Mercy appeared on the scene, and wept, and pleaded, and suffered, and died, "the just for the unjust," that men might live. And the eternal Spirit came down into this world of pollution and death, and laid siege to men's hearts, and applied atoning blood to purify the children of apostasy.

We must bear in mind that in *one* such moral event there is the pledge, and the foretaste, of the *world's* redemption. That *one* repenting sinner represents the final recovery of the *race* to God, and the completed kingdom of Jesus Christ. It repeats the whole story of redeeming love. It illustrates the whole teaching of revelation. It assures, in a way that cannot fail to convince and impress, that the Cross is equal to the stupendous work which it has undertaken, and that the blood of Christ is ample, in virtue and efficacy, to save a *world* of sinners.

Here is the *groundwork* of celestial rejoicing over repenting sinners. Let us now note some of the *particular reasons* which excite joy in heaven.

1. There is a *reconciliation*, a moral *harmony*, a *restoration*, accomplished, wonderful in character, divine in spirit, glorious in results. One of the radical ends of the Mediatorial appointment, and of the death of Christ on the cross, as we are distinctly told in Scripture, is to "reconcile all things, whether they be things in heaven or things in earth, or things under the earth, by him I say to reconcile all things." One of the most appalling effects of sin, in its influence on man, is the spirit of *enmity to God* which it begets in man's heart, and the elements of *disorder* and *strife* which it brought into the world. It is a disrupting, disturbing, warring power, and that of the most radical and diabolical kind. The original constitution of things was a grand, a universal harmony. It bore the impress of one all-perfect Mind, in all its parts, laws and arrangements. It was a vast system of material and rational existence, perfectly adjusted in every part, and all moving on in order and harmony. Every atom, every world, every creature, was perfect in itself yet related to the entire system and obedient to universal laws. It reflected the serene perfect peace of the Divine Mind. There *was* music then in the "spheres," music in every heart! The jarring of shattered constitutions, the chafing of conflicting interests, the war of antagonistic principles, and the perpetual strife of angry elements, were not then sad realities as now. Adam when placed in Eden, was in harmony with his surroundings. There was not a discordant note in his soul, nor a discordant note in nature. There was no principle of evil within, and no power of evil in the world itself. It was *sin*, that afterward marred the "harp of a thousand strings," and made it discourse discord and woe. It was the fall of Adam that brought "the curse" down upon the earth and made it to reel under the shock, and minister to man's discomfiture and misery.

Especially was this true of the *moral* and *spiritual* creation. "The sons of God" were one great, unbroken, happy family. The current of holy life flowed unchecked, clear as crystal, broad, and deep as infinitude; and all along its verdant banks were heard the songs of joy and gladness, and there was nothing to molest or make afraid, nothing to sadden or distract, in all the universe of being. Each law was obeyed, and

yet there was perfect liberty. Each being was fully occupied and perfectly happy, and yet the high ends of universal government were never lost sight of.

Had not this order of things been destroyed, and the will of the creature substituted for the will of the Creator, and the principle of selfishness come to dominate the human heart, *that* would have been the blessed condition of the world *to-day;* and not of our world only, but of all worlds. But alas! Sin broke into the universe, and what a change has it wrought! From that moment there has been no "peace" in the great family of God. Sin began in "*war*"—war in *heaven*—"war to the knife"—war between God and his subjects—war between his rational creatures—war against supreme authority, against the universal interest, against all that is sacred, and divine, and worth preserving in God's moral government, and in universal existence. "Michael, and his angels, fought against the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels," and as "there was no place found any more in heaven" for such an element, "the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world, was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him." And *here,* on this new theatre, with mankind as a new factor, and a new object to compass, that first war has been waged *ever since.* Not one jot or tittle of its malignity, or fierceness, has been abated. Not one element that entered into the strife at first, has dropped out of it. The issues are still the same. The interests involved are the same, only immensely augmented. The moral forces are unchanged. And up into the ears of angels there goes unceasingly, from this battle-field, which is to decide the fate, not of armies, and nations, simply, but the fate of worlds, and vast spiritual powers, and orders of intelligences, the sound of warring elements, the "confused noise" and tumult of armies, "with garments rolled in blood." And *still* on to the judgment day will this terrible strife continue, only waxing the fiercer, and stirring the malignant passions of evil spirits, and of their human allies, to deeper depths, and urging them to darker deeds, and more astounding blasphemy, and wickedness.

This *war*, begun in heaven, and continued on earth, fairly represents the *moral* kingdom of which man is a constituent

part. There is *war in every sinner's nature!* war to the death: war that extends to every element and force that enters into his being: a war that involves all that is of any worth in rational existence, or in immortality: war that antagonizes his heart and life to God, to his own highest interests, to duty and happiness, now and hereafter, and to the peace and welfare of the entire family of God. How truthfully, and at the same time with what graphic power, does Scripture set forth the moral condition of every sinner in this respect: "The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt." "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." Day by day the deadly strife goes on within; light with darkness, good with evil, duty with sinful inclination, truth with error, holiness with guilty passion, resolution with temptation, life with death, eternity with time, transient pleasure with the fear of judgment. And there is never a moment's *cessation* of this moral strife. Steep the soul in sin. "Sear the conscience as with a hot iron." Rush into temptation as he may, the miserable sinner cannot *disguise* the real condition of his soul. These very "excesses of riot" furnish evidence of the fact, if evidence were needed. Oh the *unrest* of the guilty spirit of man! "He walketh through dry places seeking rest," but rest he never finds, and never will find, unless he experience the power of forgiving, reconciling Mercy. He may search creation over; he may ascend the heights of science, and explore the depths of philosophy, and master poetry, and song, and literature, and art, and revel in the choicest good that society has to bestow, or ambition can gratify—*and all will be in vain!* The experiment has been tried, times without number and has never once succeeded. It *can* never succeed, unless you can first change the nature of things, transmute the eternal laws of God into fiction, or moonshine. He has "written" them "on every man's *heart;*" and the unrest of the sinner, the everlasting discord and conflict, of which he is the conscious subject, is only evidence of the reality, and the tremendous power, and the unchanging nature of those laws. And to strive against them, is as vain and impotent an act as would be an attempt to pluck the stars from their orbits!

Why, even the *physical* universe has felt the shock of this moral conflict. "For we know," affirms an inspired apostle, "that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." The whole earthly system is *doomed*, by reason of sin, and we know not how many other worlds. There is a "curse" upon it, and the fire of God s anger shall one day consume it or purify it. It conspires often against the peace and life of man. From the ground spring up tares with the wheat thorns and thistles, and noxious weeds, and poisonous herbs, innumerable. The sky above us holds the angry cloud, the destructive cyclone, and the forked lightning. While the earthquake, the volcano, the wasting pestilence and famine, and many other forms of evil, riot on human hopes, waste and destroy man's life and happiness; and all because he is an *apostate.*

I do not affirm, that all the destructive elements and forces which exist and operate in nature, are the *direct* effects of transgression, or are consequent upon its introduction and prevalence in the kingdom of moral intelligences, as the result of physical laws. But I do hold that these things enter into the framework of the *physical*, in the creative purpose of God, in order to correspond with the state of things now existing in the *spiritual* kingdom, which was foreseen from the beginning and provided against; and for the *very purpose* of subordinating them to "moral uses," when the fullness of time had come, as it did come, when the "one Mediator between God and men" assumed his office, and began his moral administration, in order to accomplish a reconciliation that should pervade the entire system of being, and endure throughout everlasting ages.

But no where are the direct and dire effects of sin, as an element of strife, so marked, and so fearful to contemplate, as on the *moral constituton* of man. Man was made in the "image of God;" but sin has dethroned him, and debased him, even to hell. He was made only "a little lower than the angels," endowed with marvelous gifts, and possibilities, and placed in a position in which he held in his own hands a most exalted and glorious destiny. But, like Lucifer, how has he "fallen from

heaven!" He is indeed a moral *wreck!* So great and total is the ruin, that he can never recover himself. The cattle on a thousand hills cannot ransom him. The waters of the ocean are not sufficient to cleanse him. There is no power in self-culture, in reason, in philosophy, in science, in society, that can reach the seat of the disorder, or restore the reign of peace and virtue in his soul. "The moral rectitude of human nature," of which we hear so much from the cultured Unitarian, is the merest figment. "Moral rectitude" has no place in man's unregenerate nature. Holiness, the new life, is a *creation*, a new fresh implanting of grace by the Spirit of God in the human soul. And, without that, it were easier to grow the fruit of paradise in the desert of Sahara, or on the barren rocks of Sinai, than to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit in the soul of man by the simple process of culture.

And the same may be said of not a little of the teachings of Rev. Henry Ward Beecher,* and the class of preachers he represents. "The dignity of human nature," "the power of true manhood," the "love of the beautiful," the "regenerating force of exalted sentiments of love and charity," which form the staple of such teaching, is the veriest nonsense—the rhapsodies of sentimentalism. And it shows a total misconception of the sinner's true spiritual condition and moral impotence. Such a view of man is not even a correct surface view of his character. All history, all human experience, contradicts it. Such weapons, wherewith to fight sin, and the world, and the Devil; wherewith to destroy the growth of evil habits, and passions, and ideas, and forces, which have thrust their roots deep

*Since the above was written, Mr. Beecher has made two noted "deliverances" respecting his present "doctrinal beliefs and unbeliefs." The first in the *North American Review* (Aug., 1882) entitled, "Progress of Thought in the Church." His "unbeliefs," as expressed in this extraordinary paper, leave him but a slender foothold. Their logical sequences destroy all faith in the essentials of orthodoxy, and in the Word of God. The "evolution" dogma of science, which he embraces "with open arms and exultation, as a release from the hideous nightmare of ages," makes a clean sweep of his old "beliefs;" while his caricatures and denunciations of Calvinism are simply puerile and atrocious. His subsequent "Statement" before the Association is less radical on some points; but in relation to sin, the atonement, and future punishment, he is world-wide apart from the orthodox faith of Christendom. His sun has set, and set in darkness. Alas, for human greatness!

down in the human soul, and lifted their trunks above the clouds, and, for a lifetime, it may be, have defied God and man, are just about as effective as it would be for a dozen raw recruits, armed with tin swords, at the sound of a kettle-drum, to go forth to subdue a large force of disciplined soldiers, armed with the latest weapons and enginery of war. No; in such a warfare; with such "foes within, and foes without," to encounter, and subjugate and actually lead captive, in order to salvation, we must "first sit down and count the cost," by a very different system of arithmetic. We must put a truer estimate on the strength and character of the enemies that beset us. We must comprehend more accurately the desperate state to which sin has reduced us. And, despairing of deliverance by our own arm, and of effective help from man, we must "cry mightily unto God." And then, with "the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God"—not nature, not manhood, not sentiment, not philosophy—go forth to the battle, and cease the warfare only with life.

Not only is man's moral condition *so desperate* that deliverance from it can only come through the Word and Spirit of omnipotent grace, but he is *conscious* of the moral strife that is continually going on within: conscious that hostile forces are contending for the mastery of him: conscious of the discord, and tumult, and self-contradiction, which is wrought out in his daily experience. For, he cannot, as experience proves, reason clearly. His mind is obscured, weak, vacillating. His conscience is not at rest: his affections are not satisfied: he cannot work out into life his ideas and purposes. He finds his plans frustated, his hopes disappointed, his visions of good fading out, his judgment misleading him, and one seeming duty or interest conflicting with another. And so he goes on all through life, dissatisfied, complaining, failing at every step, and really miserable and, at times, almost hopeless. This is *experience*, not conjecture, not revelation merely. It is an experience with which every man is painfully *familiar*, and all the soft words, and lying oracles, and flattering unctions of deceivers and infidels, will never be able to break its force. And every reflecting mind has discernment enough to see that the fault is his *own;* and he is generally honest enough to confess it,

to himself at least. He cannot, dare not, throw it upon God. He knows it is not the fault of society. Alas for him! he is confronted with the dreadful fact, that the *reason* of it all, the cause, the explanation of it all, is to be found in his *own moral nature!* He would fain believe otherwise. He has tried, long and hard it may be, to believe otherwise. He has accused God's decrees. He has thrown the blame upon society; but in vain. The truth will, at times, in spite of himself, rise up in vision, clear as the sun, and to his guilty conscience "terrible as an army with banners." He has listened to lying oracles, who have told him that the hurt of sin was but a trifle; a little reflection, and self-culture, would cure it: or that there were, in his own manhood, a strength of purpose, and power of good, all the elements needed to recover himself to God, and life, and moral goodness. But to his *cost*, he has tried *man's* way of salvation, the conceits of erratic genius, or "the milk and water diet" of naturalism, or the more dignified remedies of philosophy, but they have *all* signally failed in the hour of trial. And he is disgusted with himself, and disgusted with his teachers. He begins now to suspect, that, after all, Bible teaching is true. The orthodox faith, on this radical point of moral existence, is the veritable doctrine which his own *experience* has confirmed!

In view of such considerations—and I have barely touched upon the subject—is it really any marvel that there should be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth? Does not the event justify it? The sinner, defying God, outraging virtue and law, sinning against universal being, and madly bent on self-destruction, is arrested in his career; is made to see and feel the moral turpitude of his heart and life; and with weeping and supplication, to seek and find, in and through the cross of Christ, deliverance from his terrible thraldom, and to have a new heart given him, and a new spirit put within him, and to come forth and up out of his depravities, and debasements, into the everlasting kingdom of peace, and righteousness, and joy in the Holy Ghost. The miserable "prodigal" has come back to his "father's house." The peace and happiness of the great family in heaven was disturbed and marred by his aliena-

tion, and lost condition. But in the far off land, where he has "wasted his substance in riotous living," and been reduced to the most abject condition possible to man, he "comes to himself," and returns to a father's love and service, and is welcomed back even by the father himself. And now the breach in that circle is healed, the lost sheep is found, the disrupted tie is rejoined. Bring forth the fatted calf, and kill it, and eat and be merry, ye angels who ministered to that outcast, and guided his wandering feet back to the parental roof, and witnessed the welcome of Infinite tenderness and love over his restoration!

2. A second reason for joy in heaven over a sinner's repentance, is found in the fact, that it is in itself *infinitely reasonable and due to the Divine Government.* Nothing is so *unreasonable*, so abhorrent to truth, and to the moral sense of holy intelligences, as *sin*. It was by *deception* and *lying* that sin first gained entrance into the world. Its character is fiendish; the very counterpart of "the father of lies," the moral monster thrust out of heaven, "the old serpent" in Eden, who wriggled his huge, ugly form into the heart of Eve, and withered every flower in the garden by his horrid slime. See *sin* where you will, in any guise, in any nature, in any circumstance, in any character or relation; and there you see moral ugliness, moral deformity, moral monstrosity. It may be set in the charms of maidenly beauty, in the strength of a graceful manhood, in the attractions of the most brilliant society, in the gifts of the most splendid oratory, in the teachings of the loftiest philosophy, in the almost angelic strains of music, in the rapt vision of prophet or seer, in the divine chiselings and coloring of art, or in the captivating rhythm and ideal forms of poetry—no matter what the surroundings, the accessories, the concomitants; it may be the very bower in the midst of an Eden, fresh from the Creator's hand—no matter, if you see SIN there, you see the deadly SERPENT, with his coils, and fangs, and poison, and lying tongue, either toying with his victim, or enwrapping him in his dreadful folds, or hissing at virtue, and spoiling the whole garden!

Such being the nature of sin, in its very essence, in all its

forms of expression, and types of character—such its essential deformity, and hatefulness—it cannot but be, that it makes man odious, revolting, an object of disgust and dread to angels. They see and read the *true character* of man, as an alien from God, "a child of the Devil," an apostate from virtue, a hater of all that is morally good; full of evil thoughts, and adulteries, swayed by guilty passions, seeking low ends, consumed by vices, his whole nature "set on fire of hell," and playing the part of the serpent in Eden.

There is not an angel in heaven that would side with the sinner in the controversy he has with his Maker and Lawgiver. They know that he is wholly in the wrong. That God has done nothing to provoke it, nothing to continue it; but, on the contrary, he has done, and is doing still, all things permissible to end it, to end it at once and forever, and in a way that shall redound alike to his own glory, and to the welfare of his creatures. Never was there a controversy of such a character before in God's universe! Never one so wicked, so inexcusable, so ruinous, on the part of man, and one which is sure, in the end, to bring down upon the heads of the guilty, such a sore punishment. The existence of such a character, especially under all the light, and grace, and privilege, and discipline, of the Gospel, seems almost a *reproach* on the divine government which permits it—a spectacle to grieve and humiliate the angels of God.

The *repentance* of such an one, is, therefore, eminently *reasonable* and *just*, aside from all other considerations. It *would* be reasonable and just, if there were no provision for the *pardon* of sin: if repentance had no effect to stay the hand of divine justice. Its relations to the Law of eternal rectitude render satisfaction imperative. His evading the duty of repentance, will not alter the case in the slightest degree: How much *more* reasonable and proper when Divine mercy has interposed to shield and deliver from its curse every truly penitent soul.

Man is a creature of God, made for his own glory. He has a right to his love and service, sacred and unquestionable. God is "glorified in his saints," more than in nature, more than by all the stars in the firmament, more than by all his

providential wonders. *Character*, not power; *character*, not physical laws or phenomena, is the highest expression of glory. It is *character*—the reproduction of his own moral likeness in the creatures whom he made—that he prizes most of all, and is governing the world to produce. But the *sinner*, impenitent, unregenerate, incorrigible, defiant, is a *blot* on creation, a moral *abortion*, or *monstrosity*, a *reproach* to his government; and therefore abhorrent to the Divine mind. And hence the necessity of a total, radical, permanent change in the spirit, life, and attitude of the sinner in his moral relations.

There is no duty therefore which God ever laid upon a creature, more reasonable, or more imperative, in the very nature of things, independent of what may follow, than the gospel duty of *repentance*. It is demanded by every principle of obligation; by the law of eternal fitness; by the character and government of God; by the sentiments and interests of all his loyal subjects; and by the highest considerations of personal good. Impenitence, continued alienation, persistence in evil, especially under the light of divine revelation, in resistance of the stupendous agencies God is employing to reconcile sinners to himself, and in spite of the pleadings and offers of infinite mercy and love, is a crime of unparalleled turpitude; a crime of a deeper dye than the sin of angels, which instantly excluded them from heaven, and closed against them forever the gate of life.

O the turpitude, the malignity, the diabolical wickedness, of sin! *We* fail to see it. We even "roll it as a sweet morsel under our tongues." We toy with it—yes with "the old serpent" itself, whose deadly fangs have sent poison and death through all the world! We forget the awful denunciations of Jehovah against it, and that he is sure in the end to make good his word. We shut our eyes to the fearful displays of his wrath against sin even in this world. While it is a world of mercy and probation, yet the righteous God has, at times, as in the flood, and in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, partially vindicated his outraged law, and taken "vengeance" on his enemies. And "if these things are done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" If sin provokes punishment, so direct and signal, as it sometimes does, in this world

of mercy, and in a state of probation, what may we expect in the world of pure retribution, where every man will be judged and rewarded according to the deeds done in the body?

I am aware that it is the nature of sin, not only to *disguise* its real character, and thus allay fear, and stifle conviction; but also to *justify* a man's ways to him, no matter who he has to criminate by so doing. This feature of it clearly developed itself in the very day of the original transgression. When called to an account, Adam had the duplicity, the meanness, the hardihood, to attempt to evade the responsibility of his act: "The *woman*, whom *thou* gavest to be with me, *she* gave me of the tree, and I did eat!" Gen. 3: 12. O the *infamy*, as well as the guilt, of sin! And his example has been followed by all his descendants. The sinner, under the deceitful and blinding power of sin, has a thousand *excuses* to plead. His ways are made to appear right in his own eyes, however crooked and perverse they really are and appear in the eyes of everybody besides. He disarms the truth by means of these self-deceptions. He is not honest with himself. God is a hard master: his decrees are at fault: or his commandments are unreasonable. Or he has no time to attend to the subject. Or Christians are no better than other men. Or no man careth for his soul. Any excuse, any plea, to get rid of the damning fact, that he is *in love with sin*, and *will not give it up;* no, not even when the lightnings of angry Heaven flash full in his face, and the thunders of Sinai break over him!

Now, if we could *conceive* such an one, melted into contrition for his sins; "smiting on his breast," and, in despair of human help, thoroughly sick of his own righteousness, overwhelmed by "the terrors of the law," and ready to perish, crying, "God be merciful to me, a sinner!" And then, and ever after, coming into the liberty of the sons of God, putting on a new character, the whole currents of his life changed, a new song put into his mouth, and higher ends sought—if we could *conceive* of a change like this, all-comprehensive and permanent, and apparent to the world, so that all beholding him should be constrained to "take knowledge of him that he had been with Jesus," we might not wonder at any amount of re-

joicing over such an event. Well, this is just what the angels *do* behold, whenever a sinner repents and turns to God, and is forgiven and restored; only, our conception and presentation of the case, fall immensely short of the reality. *They* comprehend the situation, the change, the blessed effects, immediate and remote, as *we* do not, cannot. In the contemplation of such an event, the infinite excellence and glory of the Eternal Mind, and the Eternal Law of Righteousness, are brought to view with fresh lustre, and increased emphasis. The character of God, and the dignity and worth of his Law, are made more than ever conspicuous, and precious to them, by reason of it. A rebel returning to his allegiance—renouncing his evil ways, and bringing forth "fruit meet for repentance"—striving to uphold the law which he had broken and dishonored—and loving God and virtue, and delighting in prayer and praise, which he had once hated and shunned,—this is a sight of transcendent interest in heaven, even if we fail to appreciate it.

3. The way of Repentance is the way of *Happiness and Life everlasting.* If anything *can sadden* the hearts of angels, it must be the contemplation of the *misery and ruin consequent on sin.* The misery and ruin consequent on the apostasy in *heaven*, must have made a profound impression upon their minds. It is impossible, but that the rending of angelic ties; the throes of mortal agony and strife which rent and anguished angelic society; the loss of heavenly crowns and mansions, the casting out, and casting down into remediless ruin, and woe, and degradation, the lofty spirits that had been their associates in the exalted and blessed life of heaven—it is impossible but that such a sight, such an experience, should have cast a dark shadow over all "heavenly places," and left ineffaceable impressions of sadness on every heart. But, even so terrible, and so tragic a scene, as that must have been, conveys to their minds but a faint impression of the power of the misery and moral ruin there is in sin, compared with the exhibitions consequent upon and connected with it, during the six thousand years it has ravaged our world, and marred and destroyed a race of beings made in the image of God.

They are not ignorant of our history. Every page of it, from the day they sang the natal hymn over paradise, down to the present hour, is familiar to them. They know what a life of promise man entered upon, when God had blessed him, and made him to have dominion over all this fair world. They know for what exalted ends he was made, and with what capacities and powers, intellectual and moral, he was endowed, that he might be an honor to his Creator, and a blessing to the world. They beheld and admired the beauty of Eden, in its pristine fullness and glory, and of Adam and Eve as their lives conjoined in perfect unity and love, and regarded it as a symbol of the *moral* kingdom over which they were to preside, and make a perpetual paradise, to the glory of God, and the rejoicing of their posterity. They saw too alas! the sudden *blight* which quickly came over all that promise, all that scene of beauty and life. They saw the shame and anguish which took possession of the first guilty pair, when they discovered their "nakedness," and vainly strove to hide it: the look of despair and wretchedness as they passed the gate of the garden, "driven out," and confronted a sterile and cursed world: they saw the "cherubim," and "a flaming sword placed at the east of the garden, which turned every way," to guard "the tree of life."

If they comprehended the nature, the extent, and the appalling bitterness of the curse which sin entails, in that sad hour, what must they have experienced *since*, under the long and world-wide reign of the apostasy? If they followed the track of the fugitives during all their subsequent wanderings, as doubtless they did, and saw them eating bread in the sweat of their brow, contending with "thorns and thistles" which everywhere sprang up in their pathway, suffering, in mind and heart and body, in a thousand forms, mourning over lost innocence and joys, and fearing death, and drinking the bitter waters of sin, instead of "the river of the water of life"—stunned, dismayed, overwhelmed with grief, when the blood of murdered Abel cried from the ground for vengeance, and their first born, with a felon's brand on his forehead, went forth from the presence of God "a fugitive and a vagabond,"—if they saw all this world of misery in the experience of the

first guilty pair, Nemesis pursuing them with relentless steps, and a pitiless heart, day by day, till they sank into the earth, whence they came,—what must the history of the human race, from Adam down through all the generations, present to their minds?

If *Eden* faded and vanished under the touch of sin, it was but a type of the *world*, and the blighting effects of sin upon it. It is *now*, and has been for sixty centuries, an Edenless world. Man's soul too, has been without its Eden! No "river flows" to water the earth. No "tree of life" grows in its soil for man to eat the fruit thereof. It is "a dry and thirsty land, where no water is," a "weary land," with no tree or rock to shade the fainting soul; a "fearful land," full of dangers, and enemies, in every form, and trials, and burdens, and crosses; a land that yieldeth only "the apples of Sodom" and "the waters of Marah;" "the land of the shadow of death," peopled with "evil spirits," and "unclean spirits" fear, and sorrow, and suffering, in ten thousand forms. And there is nothing in *prospect*, for each successive generation as it comes upon the stage of life, but the same melancholy experience, the like career of shame, and woe, and guilt, ending in the grave, and a lost eternity. Aside from the gospel, angels see and know there is *no hope* for the world, no hope for man, no possible way of recovery, no power to drive away the cherubim and remove the flaming sword from the entrance gate to a paradisaical state. Nothing, absolutely nothing, in store for man, but misery and ruin on earth, so long as God shall suffer it to stand as a foul blot upon his creation, and misery and ruin, complete and unending, in the future state.

Such observation of the uniform and terrible effects of sin on mankind—an observation made under the most favorable circumstances possible for a full and correct knowledge, and extending over so vast a field of experience, and over so long a period of time—must, in the nature of things, profoundly excite and impress them. They are able to take in at one view this *whole* dark history of human life, under the curse, of human experience, while alienated from God and under the dominion of moral evil, to compute, as it were, the measure of

human guilt and misery, and forecast and gauge the eternity of woe stored up for the race. And all the while, they know full well, that man was *made for a very different* destiny. Taking rank only "a little lower" than their own, they know what his capacities are, what his opportunities were before the fall, now more glorious in Christ than in the First Adam, and what his possibilities for exalted virtue, and service and enjoyment are, in the kingdom of grace. They cannot fail to contrast what *might* have been the history of our world, and the career and destiny of man, in time and in eternity, with what they *are*, as stern and tremendous realities. And in this contrast there is concentrated, as it were, the light of a thousand revelations, testifying to the evil and dreadful nature of Sin, and the infinite worth of that divine Law which antagonizes it, and anathematizes it, and puts forth its hand to arrest and punish it.

Alas! that we, in striking contrast with angels, should fail to comprehend the true nature of sin, as an element of misery and death, as well as an element of guilt and punishment. With the record of sin's doings in the world, ever since it destroyed Eden, and drove man out into a cursed and doomed "wilderness," before our eyes; with our observation of its blighting and damning influence on all the life around us; and with our own bitter experience of its power to rob us of innocence, and peace, and happiness, here and hereafter, we will persist in dallying with it, in excusing it, in thinking it a small offense, so trifling that God would be a very "unjust God," a "tyrant, that should be dethroned," if he were to inflict eternal punishment on any of his creatures, because of sin,—as has been said, even from pulpits professing to be Christian!

The contemplation of a creature of God, thus dragged down into the mire and filth of sin; thus despoiled of innocence and virtue, and turned out of paradise, and left to wander up and down the earth,—the sport of evil passions, and a thousand evil elements, "a fugitive and a vagabond,"—the prey of remorse, and looking forward to nothing in the future but despair and torment—the contemplation of one in such a state,

and with such an experience, and such a prospect before him, —suddenly touched by a power Divine, and "raised from death to life;" transformed by the power of the Spirit into the image of the heavenly, rescued from the thraldom of sin, and introduced into the liberty of the sons of God – night turned into day, death into life, misery into happiness, pure and full and eternal. Such a sight might well send a wave of holy joy through all the courts above. Every such instance would thrill earth itself and turn it into a world of praise, if *we* saw things as *angels* see them: if we truly comprehended sin, in its nature and fruits, and redemption in its genius and transcendent results on character and destiny.

4. Another reason for joy in heaven over a sinner's repentance is, that it *prepares the way for him to join the angels as an associate in the joy and blessedness of heaven.* Until this great moral change does occur, man is "an alien from the commonwealth" of the true Israel, a child of the Devil, an heir of hell. There is no *fitness* in him for the abode, or the pursuits of the sons of God. The angels have not one feeling of interest or sympathy in common with him. There is not a tie uniting them. Their lines of life, and hope, and destiny, are at an infinite remove, one from the other. If it were announced to them, that this world was to be joined on to theirs, emptied into it, amalgamated with it, it would fill them with consternation. They may *pity* the sinner, and do pity him, as Christ pitied him, and died to save him. But they cannot *love* him: cannot fellowship his character, or his ways. On the contrary, they feel the power of a great moral repulsion. They are drawn to him, and "encamp round about him," not by the force of a moral attraction, but for the same reason that *Jesus* came into a world of sinners, and mingled with them, and put his being in contact with theirs, that he might lift them up, by his teaching and character, into a new life.

But the day of the sinner's *repentance* is the day of a wonderful *change* in the feelings of angels towards him—a change corresponding to that which has taken place in the character and condition of the sinner himself. The relations of things have suddenly undergone a radical transformation. The bar-

rier which sin had reared to prevent intercourse, is now broken down, and the intercepted lines of communication between earth and heaven, are all restored. Now they recognize in him the glorious "image" lost in Eden; they see in him a member of the great spiritual brotherhood, a fellow-heir of immortality, one entitled to their full confidence and love, one to whom it will be a delight, as well as a duty, to minister, as to an heir of salvation. Freely forgiven of God for the past, washed in the blood of the great atonement, sanctified by the Spirit of holiness, and adopted into the family of the saints, whereby he can rightfully cry, "Abba, Father," they now regard him, as Christ himself does, with complacency, and take unspeakable interest in him, and watch his future course with a loving tenderness, only surpassed by that of "Him who laid down his life for his sheep." How their hearts yearn towards him, in the holy ministries, as they see him struggling manfully to resist temptation, to crucify his evil nature and keep it in subjection, to rise to God on the wings of praise and prayer, and to bring forth "the fruit of the Spirit" in his daily life. They joy with fresh rejoicing over every victory which he achieves—over every step of progress he makes in the divine life. What holy sympathy do they feel for him, in the day of trial, in the hour of sadness, and weakness, and fear, under the vicissitudes and afflictions of life? Often, we doubt not, unconscious to ourselves, their presence and ministry, is all that keeps us from falling—all that stands between us and despair. The Divine Saviour sends these good angels down to us to "comfort," to "strengthen" his saints, even as they comforted, and strengthened, and ministered to *Him*, in the wilderness, in the garden, and on the cross. So intimate, and sacred, we believe, is the tie binding saints and angels into one, even here in the flesh, that we can almost be *conscious* of their presence, and influence upon us. And we may believe that they often long for the hour to come when the thin barrier which now parts these kindred spirits, the "joint heirs" of heaven, shall dissolve, and the eternal communion and fellowship shall begin.

Well, they will not have *long* to wait! The time of the saint's sojourn here is short at best. The race is quickly run,

and then "the crown of righteousness." While the angels hold their watch the saint of God, with a bound, reaches the goal; and then with a shout of welcome and triumph, angels carry him upward and crown him in heaven. And this watching over, and ministering to, and feeling for him here, will amazingly endear the saint to angels there, when once the river is passed, and the peril is escaped, and the victory is won. O with what mutual and rapturous joy will saints and angels come together in heaven, and rehearse the history of their experience, and ministration, and together, in eternal harmony, celebrate the praises of Redeeming love and grace!

A redeemed sinner in heaven! It will be a *peculiar* feature of that world. It will be the greatest of marvels. It will be an object of eternal wonder and study to angels. The tremendous evils to which he had been exposed; his experiences of guilt, and misery and moral ruin, in his own person during his earthly career; the extraordinary nature of the expedients adopted to recover him from his apostate state, and restore him to his Maker; and the mysterious influence of death and the resurrection upon him—will make him the very centre of interest. While their peculiar *relations to Christ*, the Head and Glory of that world, will invest them with a lustre all their own, and distinguish them from all others. They are the special fruit of his travail, and bloody sweat, and death upon the cross. They are "members of his spiritual body," his peculiar heritage; the reflections of his own masterly character. They will share his wondrous glory, in a sense and degree which no angel will ever attain. The Church of redeemed sinners, raised to glory immortal, and made perfect in moral beauty and worth, is to be, in a spiritual sense, the "Lamb's Bride," and He will take infinite delight in her, and lavish upon her the wealth of his everlasting love. And she shall shine in a beauty, and dignity, and splendor, worthy of Him who hath chosen her, and redeemed her, and exalted her, above all other finite creatures.

There is a *practical* side to this topic which we do well to consider. It may be that my reader has said to himself, "Well,

what matters it if angels do feel all this interest in view of a sinner's repentence: What has that to do with *me?*" It is a proper question, and I would fain answer it, to my own conscience, and to my reader's, as I shall one day be called to answer it to the Lord of angels and of men.

1. *The joy of angels over a sinner's repentance, is an emphatic rebuke of the apathy of Christians in the matter of salvation,* both their own and others. The joy of angels is not a selfish feeling. It is not because it adds anything to their felicity or glory. The measure of their bliss is full already. And yet, as I have shown elsewhere, there are reasons abundant why they should rejoice. Such an event has a wonderful moral significance in their eyes. The submission of such a rebel to the supreme authority of Jesus Christ; the recovery to God and virtue, of a lost soul; the honor thereby put upon the divine law; the amazing displays of grace connected with the event; the promises confirmed, and the hopes inspired by it, —all conspire to make the conversion of man a stupendous and glorious achievement. There is nothing transpiring in God's universe at all comparable with it. There is concentrated in it all moral power and blessedness. It were just as possible, just as easy, for God to convert and save a *world* of sinners, as to convert and save a *single* soul. The exercise of creative power; the swaying of omnipotent energy in nature; the rise and fall of kingdoms and dynasties; the social and political changes occurring in the earth; the displays of beauty, and wealth, and grandeur, and the advancement of science and art—none of these things attract the attention or move the society of heaven, as does the genuine repentance of the obscurest sinner in the world. SALVATION, O Salvation! A lost sinner's, a guilty creature's salvation, by the cross of Christ! This is the *one* desire of their hearts, the *one* aim of their holy ministries, the *one* matter of their rejoicing. All their anxieties, all their sympathies, centre here on this *one* subject. For this the world exists. For this Jesus assumed humanity, and died upon the cross. For this the Holy Spirit was sent down into the earth. For this the ministry, the Sabbath, the sacraments of religion, were instituted, and the whole system of moral agencies was put in operation and is

continued. What *men* call the great events of history, are trifles in their esteem, compared with this. What *men* call mean, small, of no account, *they* count of highest worth, of superlative glory. As they wing their flight over this world, the theatre of great moral forces contending for the supremacy, man the sole prize, and survey its teeming life, and numberless activities—the din of its business, the glitter of wealth, the temples of its learning, the pride of its greatness the tread of its armies, the war of its navies, the tumult of nations, and the decay and waste of human life—none of these things hold their attention, or attract their sympathies. But they *do* watch the falling tear of the penitent, and catch the sigh of the contrite. They *do* hover over the closet, the sanctuary, the place of prayer, to see if any are found seeking God: they *do* delight to minister to the saint in all his times of need, and help him on and up to glory immortal.

And is there no *rebuke* in this to *our* apathy, our dullness, our unfaithfulness? Angels in heaven, and Christians in earth, have a *common* cause, a common interest, a common tie, a common destiny in the everlasting kingdom. And, hence, they should have a *fellow-feeling*. The desire, the anxiety, the joy, of angels should be the desire, the anxiety, the joy of every good man. The Christian, always and everywhere, should look upon an unconverted sinner with the pity of an angel, follow him with the yearning solicitude of an angel, and joy over his conversion with the joy of angels. Life should have no end so high, no service so sacred, no attraction so great, as that which relates to the gaining over of a soul to moral virtue and to God, the plucking of an immortal being from "everlasting destruction." If we had a *true* estimate of things, this *would* be so. We could not live for any inferior good. Our own salvation, and the salvation of men around us, and everywhere within the reach of our influence, would be the one burden, the one solicitude, the one endeavor of life. To this we would willingly consecrate our entire being, and count it an honor, as well as a duty to do so. To win a soul to Christ, and thereby "hide a multitude of sins," and add another crown to the heavenly world, would be ambition enough for us, reward enough, for all the time and effort and expenditure

it might cost. We should consider a day, a Sabbath, *lost*, that did not contribute to this end. We could not sit down to enjoy life, knowing that we were neglecting our duty in respect to this supreme interest; were, seemingly, doing nothing effective in bringing about such a result.

The *preacher* of the gospel could not acquit his conscience, if he sought, in his high vocation, any object, any interest, any good, save that involved in the *conversion of the soul.* He could not feel any concern about his "popularity," his "standing" among men, his worldly "success." The conversion of souls would outweigh all other considerations, and he would consent to be anything, or nothing, in the world's esteem, "to have his name cast out as evil among men," to go anywhere, enter any field, perform any work, however humble or arduous, and endure any personal sacrifice, if but this one result could be gained.

The *pastor* could not rest content—could not look on his ministry with the least satisfaction—no matter how brilliant, or how successful, or how popular in all other respects it might be, so long as *souls* were not given him as his "hire." So long as the guilty, dying, judgment-bound creatures, entrusted to his keeping by the ascended Lord, were not actually *converted.* And so, in measure corresponding to his sphere and opportunities, would every *Christian* feel, and act, if he put a just estimate on redeeming obligations, and on the worth and peril of the human soul. What a scene of activity would the church of Christ present to day; what consecration, what lofty devotion to the high ends of the gospel; what praise and prayer, what labor and devotion; what harvests of ingathering, what revenues of glory to Jesus Christ would be seen and experienced on every side! And how quickly would the "millennium" be a glad reality, instead of an uncertain hope, *if* the great body of quickened, washed, redeemed, sinners, now on earth, should once show the spirit and consecration of *angels* on the field of human redemption!

Our Divine Master gives us *his* estimate of the comparative value of a soul, in contrast with all other good, in that startling inquiry, "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man

give in exchange for his soul?" Mark 8: 36, 37. It is clear that the salvation of but one sinner, and he the weakest and poorest specimen of humanity, even a degraded Hottentot, or an untutored Indian, is worth, in the hands of the new-creating Spirit, all the treasures of wealth, and toil, and sympathy, and prayer, that the Church of God has ever poured out at the feet of Jesus.

Alas! that the great heart of the Christian Church should not melt and flow out in a universal, all-encompassing tide of sympathy, and anxiety, and yearning tenderness, towards sinners, estranged, blinded, enthralled, miserable, and ready to perish, and sure to perish, and perish quickly, and perish under a load of guilt and woe greatly enhanced by the coming of Christ into the world to save men. Alas! that those upon whom this great change has been wrought; who have felt, in their own souls, the joys of pardoning grace; whose "feet have been taken out of the horrible pit and the miry clay," and planted on "the Rock of Ages;" who know the dreadful character of sin, and how hard it is to break away from it, by a bitter experience, and who expect soon to join the glorified host on high—that even such should *need* argument, entreaty, warning, to induce them to pity the perishing sinners with whom they are brought into daily contact, and many of whom are their dearest friends, their "kindred according to the flesh." Must not our apathy, our seeming indifference, astonish angels? The very stones of the street, or the beams out of the wall, might well cry out against us.

2. The joy of angels, over a sinner's repentance, is an *affecting motive for us to pray and labor for the salvation of men.* The feeling which such an event creates in heaven, shows us how *they* would act if they were allowed to take *our* place in the economy of Christ's kingdom. They are now enlisted in the work of saving men. For, "are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" Heb. 1: 14. The precise manner in which they thus minister, and the extent of their agency upon us, and over nature and providence as related to us, we know not now, but we shall know hereafter. But I have no doubt that their min-

istry is a far more important factor, in our lives and characters, than we are wont to suppose. There are Scripture intimations, that the vail which separates these spirits from us and parts us from the whole supernatural system, is a very thin vail, as well as a very mysterious one, almost transparent, and, at times, in *special* conditions, as in the hour preceding dissolution, we may be permitted to lift the vail, and look beyond the narrow boundary of the flesh; or have our spiritual senses so quickened as that we shall be able to see things not visible to the bodily eyes. As when Elisha prayed, when the city was compassed by the armies of Syria, and there was no seeming deliverance. "And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw, and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha." 2 Kings 6: 17.

So, unseen by the eyes of sense, and unconscious of the modes or channels of their ministry in our behalf, the spirit-world encompasses us continually, puts itself in immediate contact with our spirits, projects thoughts and influences into our being, and thereby, in a thousand ways, guards us against dangers, and evils, and strengthens our moral nature, and helps us greatly in the fight of faith. True, Christ could do this directly; or the Holy Spirit could do it. But God always works by *means*. He could convert all the sinners on earth without any aid from us, or from angels. But that is not the economy of his kingdom. Christ could have sustained himself in the desert, and in the garden, and at other times of peculiar trial, while in the flesh. But he chose rather to fall back on the ministry of angels. He could have opened the eyes of the blind man without using "spittle," and fed the multitude without taking the boy's "five loaves and two small fishes" But that would not have comported with his plan. And so he has ordained the ministry of angels, and the ministry of an order of men, specially called and set apart by him for the work, in order to bring sinners to Christ, and to train saints for the kingdom of heaven. We cannot see these spiritual laborers. We cannot communicate with them by any of our bodily organs. But we are *susceptible to their influence*, as truly as we are to other spiritual influences. And, coming from a living, active sympathizing agent, and acting directly on the

mind, mind upon mind, it is of the most powerful kind. Did you ever contemplate the meaning of that ascription in heaven in which the whole choir of angels give expression to their joy over redeeming conquests on earth? "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of hosts: the *whole earth is full of his glory!*" There is a glory seen *here* which is never seen even in heaven. Earth hath privileges never granted there. The soil of heaven was never sanctified by redeeming blood, or by the tears of godly penitence over sin. It was never permitted an angel *there* to pour the light of life into minds darkened by evil passion, or to take by the hand the far-off prodigal or outcast, and gently lead him back to a father's love and blessing. No: such holy and exalted ministries, such peculiar and blood-bought a privilege, are confined to *earth*. All that angels can, or will ever do for sinners, must be done *here*—here in this present brief life. What they do for you and for me, "must be done quickly," for soon "the night cometh"—not to them, but to us—in which there is no further work done for the sinner and no repentance.

And this is equally applicable to *Christians*. Now blessed opportunities wait on us. Now eyes, and ears, and hearts, and lives, are open to us, and we have direct access to sinners, in countless numbers, and by a thousand influences. Now the angels wait, and Christ and the Spirit wait, to second our endeavors and give saving effect to our ministry. Now, "all things" are ready and waiting, it may be even the heart of some poor, thirsty, sorrowing, perishing sinner, in our immediate circle, in our own family, or in our Sunday-school class, or in the congregation to which we are preaching. And we have only to cast in the seed and reap the harvest: or say the fitting word and gain a soul: or be faithful to our sacred trust and transform a child of sin into an heir of glory. But privileges, such as these, do not abide. "*That thou doest, do quickly!*" That sinner, now so accessible to you, with his feet on the very threshold of the kingdom, will soon be beyond your reach forever, if you let the golden opportunity slip. Or your time for prayer, for exhortation, for entreaty, for influence, will have ended, and ended forever. O the value of the *present* opportunity, the present brief hour, when we look at them in

relation to a duty performed or neglected, a sinner won or lost!

3. The joy of angels "over one sinner that repenteth," is an *affecting motive that pleads with every man to turn unto God.* Hear the announcement, ye careless, thoughtless, men and women, immersed in worldly cares and pleasures. It is the Son of God himself who makes it: "I say unto you likewise that joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance." O wonderful announcement! Think of it. It is not that some new world has been created, or some magnificent discovery has been made. No: it is that a "sinner," no matter who, king or peasant, a philosopher or an illiterate man, one known to fame or wholly unknown: it is enough that he is a "sinner," and has repented. Is it not a moving fact when our earthly friends and kindred take a deep interest in our welfare, rejoice in our success in life, and are at every possible pains to promote it? But the Lord of glory has come down out of heaven to tell us, to tell you and I, that we are cared for *there*, by myriads of angels, whose lives are spent in ministering to us "as heirs of salvation;" who, though we know them not, and cannot speak our thanks, or reward them in any way, are serving us day and night, from infancy until death, and who rejoice with a great rejoicing, if they can but bring us to repentance. Amazing! Those far off, exalted beings, take an interest in our eternal welfare, which we do not feel for ourselves. Wait and watch for our repentance, while we give ourselves little or no concern about the matter. Can it be—is it reality—that repentance, and faith in Christ, is the only way of life—and that the soul is the one supreme interest we have at stake—and yet we can live and die in impenitence and unbelief, in no wise advantaged by the death of Christ, and all the holy ministries of angels and saints!

You complain—oh how often is it made an excuse for refusing to repent and obey the gospel!—that "no man careth for your soul." Well, it is too true. Christians have occasion to plead guilty, and confess with shame. It is a wonder and a grief, often to ourselves, that we do feel and manifest so little concern for you, when we know your awful condition, and in-

finite peril; that we do bestir us so little to pluck you as brands from the burning. You *are* a spectacle, in your impenitent and unregenerate state under the gospel, sad and fearful enough, to move a heart of stone, and draw tears from every eye that beholds you. But, deficient in sympathy and effort as Christians on earth may be, let me assure you, that in *heaven* it is far otherwise. There the burden on all hearts is your salvation. There the one strife, the one duty, is to bring you to repentance. And they know no joy so great as the joy over your repentance. Day by day they "encamp round about you." When you go forth to business, or to pleasure, or lie down to sleep, their watch is upon you. Could they but speak to you, in human language, what words of tender expostulation, of earnest entreaty, of divine sympathy, would they pour into your ear! Could you lift the vail for a moment, what a scene would astonish your vision! What eyes would be seen bent intently upon you! What a multitude of anxious ones surrounding you, intent on your salvation! All this is *reality*, though you are not conscious of it. And can you resist with a callous heart the force of such a motive, added to all the other motives which plead with you to repent of your sins and seek forgiveness through the justifying righteousness of Christ? Will you not make this very day the day that angels shall record in heaven your birth into the kingdom of God, and rejoice over it with a great rejoicing?

4. If there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, is not the inference legitimate, that *the continued impenitence of multitudes under the Gospel is an occasion of grief to angels?* Many think that the idea of pain, grief, anxiety, in heaven, is inadmissible: that, as there is no sin there, there can be none of its effects felt; no sadness, no shade of anxiety, nothing to check the flow of perpetual sunshine, and happiness. But this idea is not warranted by Scripture or reason. Doubtless that will be the condition of heaven after the judgment, in "the everlasting kingdom." But it is not so now. Heaven has not yet put on its final, fixed, completed character and life. It is all the while undergoing changes, and will continue to experience them, until the end of all things here below shall be ac-

complished. Heaven is a very different world to-day from what it was at the close of the great rebellion there, which so thinned the angel ranks, and left its frightful scars in "all heavenly places." Heaven was a different society after Adam and Eve's introduction there—"sinners saved by grace"—the *first* sinners ever forgiven of God, and restored to life—the first sinners that ever passed through the gates of the celestial city. And so the change has been more marked and wonderful, as the centuries have rolled on, and innumerable saints, with "robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb," have joined that first pair, and put on the crowns, and occupied the mansions of that blessed world. And heaven will wear a more glorious aspect still, when the matured fruits of the Cross have all been garnered there.

Now there are striking *resemblances* in the condition of the two worlds, only there is no moral imperfection there, and there is a great deal of it here, even in the best soul, and in the best society earth can produce. But both worlds are incomplete. Both are undergoing radical moral changes in the elements which compose the life and the expression of society. Both are in a state of great moral activity in reference to the kingdom of Christ, which embraces alike both worlds. Both have immense and common interests at stake in the final suppression of sin, and the prevalence of holiness. It is impossible but that all heaven, from God down through all the ranks of angels, feels the intensest interest and solicitude in view of this conflict, and its final outcome. Its success, in the nature of things, must afford them great delight, and increase their happiness. While its failure, or partial failure, and its reverses, and perils, must necessarily disturb their peace, and sadden their hearts. God himself is not without an experience of this kind, speaking after the manner of men. He is "grieved" at our hardness of heart. "It repenteth him" that he hath made man, when he sees him given over to wickedness. The Saviour himself is "wounded" in the house of his friends, "crucified afresh and put to open shame," when his disciples fall into sin, or fall away from "the faith once delivered to the saints." And surely angels cannot be unconcerned spectators, or go about their ministries with an unfeeling heart.

Hence it is reasonable to suppose that the sight of millions living under all the light and grace of Christianity and passing on to the judgment, in rebellion against God, in resistance of the Holy Ghost, in the "neglect of so great salvation," "treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath," will agitate their being to its profoundest depths, and fill them with pain and grief. They see the mind of the Eternal Father planning, and sacrificing, to save a rebellious race. They see Christ descend to earth, and assume human nature, and weep over and plead with men, and die on the cross, to atone for their sins, and then ascend to heaven, and there at the right hand of God interceding for them with groanings which cannot be uttered. They see the Holy Ghost sent down into the world and devoting his omnipotent agency and influence, for thousands of years, in order to convince men of sin and draw them to Christ. They see wise and powerful agencies and instrumentalities, ordained, and put in force, and kept alive century after century, in order to rescue men from sin, win them to virtue, and save them from perdition. And yet, in the face of it all, in spite of it all, they see those for whom Christ died, with whom the Holy Spirit strives, to whom salvation is preached, in whose hands and homes the Bible is found, upon whom all the motives, and influences, and agencies of Christianity, have exerted their full power,—they see these very persons, not singly only but in great crowds, refuse Christ, and will not have Christ to reign over them; and persist in their evil ways, year after year, until "the long-suffering goodness of God" is finally exhausted; "so I sware in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest." Heb. iii: 11.

"Who can describe the joys that rise
Thro' all the courts of paradise,
To see a prodigal return,
To see an heir of glory born?

With joy the Father doth approve
The fruit of his eternal love:
The Son with joy looks down and sees
The purchase of his agonies.

The Spirit takes delight to view
The holy soul he formed anew!
And saints and angels join to sing
The growing empire of their King."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE SUBJECTIVE CHARACTER AND FORMS OF CHRIST'S REDEMPTIVE WORK.

SECTION I.

THE CHURCH: THE END TO BE SUBSERVED IN THE GATHERING AND PERFECTING OF IT OUT OF THE MORAL RUINS OF THE FALL.

It were easy to conceive of human Redemption as an act of power and grace bestowed upon individual man, having no special relations or ends to subserve beyond his individual happiness; in other words, as a *personal* thing. So far as man himself is concerned, his salvation, under such a view of the case, would have been just as real, just as important and as grand, in its personal aspects, as under any other view. But this view does not meet the facts of the case, however it may comport with our mean and selfish ways. Christ is not the Saviour of a great number of isolated sinners, simply. This is not the genius of Christianity, nor its high ultimate end. Immensely important as salvation is, to each and every child of Adam, that accomplishment is only a means to an end of grander character, and greater proportions still. God's glory, Christ's reward, an everlasting kingdom of Righteousness and Peace—nothing less than this, is contemplated and sought in the Divine plan. The grand idea of the mission of Christ was to new create the human race, and restore it to God in the unity and perfectness of a universal spiritual kingdom.

This idea runs through the entire Scriptures, of both Testaments. It is one of their most prominent characteristics. While the individual or personal relations of the believer to Christ, are never lost sight of, they are subordinated to higher

and grander ends. He is taught, and taught emphatically, and on every page of the gospel, that his salvation is not a *selfish* thing, a personal good only or even chiefly: that he is not his own but has been bought with a price, even with the precious blood of Christ, whose he is, and whom he is bound to serve: that even the life he now lives in the flesh, he lives by faith on the Son of God: it is a "life hid with Christ in God." He has no right therefore, to spend his life for selfish ends. It is a *redeemed*, a consecrated life, and it is a fearful sin, a sacrilege, to devote such a life to vain and transient good. Nor is he at liberty to "hide his light under a bushel;" to follow Christ in a private way: or to stand aloof from the brotherhood of saints. He is required by Him who redeemed him with so great a ransom, to "take up his cross and follow him;" to come out and separate himself from the enemies of God and holiness, and take upon himself the vows and obligations of a public profession of Christianity, and put himself in relations with the Church of Christ, and bear his full share in supporting her institutions, and making her efficient for good, and worthy of the grace and love bestowed upon her by her ascended Lord.

What is called in scripture, "the church," "the church of Christ," "the church of God," "the church of the living God," figures conspicuously in the divine Word, and most of all in the writings of Paul, and is treated as one of the chief factors in the Redemptive system. In his epistle to Titus (2: 14) he expresses the great, the sublime idea, in a single verse, which epitomizes the entire Gospel and is worthy of careful study, and constant consideration: "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Mark the two leading ideas of the passage. First, the *collective* idea, or unity purpose—"for us," the Church, not for Paul or any number of isolated beings—but for the whole redeemed family. Second, the *subjective* idea, in distinction from the *objective*—the immediate practical results in relation to character and the subjects of divine grace, and not any remote or ultimate purpose—the particular sphere of the church, and not its effects on angels in heavenly places.

This is an exceedingly interesting and important part of Christ's great work, as it brings into prominent view the *practical* side of it, our immediate relations to it in the way of duty, and privilege, and attainment, and the various characters or relations in which the Lord Jesus Christ is presented to us, as "the Way, the Truth, and the Life," of his people. The ground covered by this branch of my subject, is a very broad one, and would require volumes for anything like a full or exhaustive discussion of it. The most I propose to do, is an outline-sketch of some of its more prominent features.

Note, first, then, the fact that salvation is a *gift*, not a purchase—"*gave* himself." This idea is radical and all-important in its bearings: it is all-comprehensive also in its scope. From its incipiency, in the secret counsels of eternity, to its consummation in the last judgment, the salvation of man is all of *grace*. It is unmerited; it is simply of God's sovereign pleasure. There is nothing in man deserving it, nothing inviting to or prompting it. If man had his deserts, his case would have been as hopeless as that of devils. It is only because, in his sovereign purpose, giving account of himself to no creature, God has seen fit to interpose, in the case of man, to arrest the operations of pure justice and law, and on the ground of the substituted righteousness of another deal with repentant believing sinners just as if they had never transgressed. And this principle of free grace or unmerited favor, runs through the enfire system of salvation, and gives it character and expression. It is, from first to last, on earth and in heaven, now and forever, *a sa'vation without one iota of human merit.* Man can do absolutely nothing to purchase it, or to merit it, in whole or in part. If he is ever saved, he will owe it all to the sovereign mercy and grace of God in Jesus Christ. There is not a sinner on earth to-day, there never was one, there never will be one, who can enter into life on the ground of his *personal* righteousness. The best, the strictest, the most virtuous character that ever existed on earth, save Christ, is still at an infinite remove from eternal life, until he submits to the righteousness of Christ, comes as "a little child" and enters the kingdom of heaven by faith in the atoning sacrifice of Calvary.

It will ever be true in the future, as it has been in the past; as true of the moralist, as of "publicans and sinners," as true of the Pharisees of religion, as of the Mary Magdalenes of society: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." 1 Tim. 1, 15.

We may and do often lose sight of this radical fact. Man is "ever going about to establish a righteousness of his own;" striving, early and late, and in a thousand ways—by penance, by a round of duty, by attendance on the word and ordinances of the church, by "giving the fruits of his body for the sins of his soul"—striving to merit or purchase salvation—as if he verily thought the grace of God could be *bought* like a commodity in the markets of the world; that that which cost the eternal Son of God his life's blood on the cross, could be earned, secured, by the worthless offerings of the sinful creature, for whom he paid such a ransom. Probably there is no idea that takes such full possession of the human heart, and so constantly asserts itself, and so persistently maintains its sway, to the very last, as this idea of *merit*. We attach it to everything, to every condition, to every service, even to our prayers and sacrifices, yea even to our repentance! And we have no conception of its vitiating power. It is worse than the fly in the apothecary's precious ointment. It spoils the character. It makes our services a very "stench in the nostrils" of the Redeemer. It turns aside from us the blessing. Christ will have the whole reward and glory of our salvation, or he will have none. There is no door open for a compromise here. Man's righteousness, at its best estate, is as "filthy rags," unclean and worthless; and if we have no better covering than that, we are sure to be shut out of heaven, "not having on the wedding garment."

Note, secondly, the *gift* itself—who gave *himself* for us. It was not only a gift, but a stupendous gift. It was not a gift of some minor or collateral good, or of some object that might be bestowed without sacrifice—but he gave "*himself*," the highest gift which even the Son of the Highest could bestow—the gift which involved the greatest possible personal sacrifice on

the part of the giver—a gift which embraced all other forms of good, both for time and eternity; gave himself, with all his wealth of love, with all his treasures of wisdom and power, with all the merit and efficacy of his atonement, and personal ministry, and intercession, with all his power to enlighten and quicken, to convert, through the Holy Spirit, and to reward in his everlasting kingdom. Never was there such a gift before! Never can there be another like it! Infinity itself went to its utmost limit, exhausted its resources, when it gave CHRIST, the only begotten Son of God, for the sins of the world. And still it was a *free* gift; and as voluntary as free; as stupendous, in its character, in its worth, in its moral grandeur, as it was free and voluntary. God was under no obligation to bestow such a gift, no, not even if every child of Adam must sink to hopeless ruin. The law that had been broken was righteous and good. The penalty incurred by man was a just penalty. Its infliction, to the utmost, would have been approved by every angel in heaven, and was a fitting satisfaction to Divine Justice. Christ was under no obligation to make such a personal sacrifice. He did not make it to save angelic crowns. He sat on the throne of his glory then and executed the law to its very letter, and hurled from their lofty seats every rebellious spirit, and drove them out of heaven, and put upon them the chains of darkness. But when man rebelled, seeing that no less a sacrifice would answer, he descended from the throne, came down into this moral prison, and took our place under the law, and bore our sins in his own body on the tree—in a word, "gave himself" an offering, a "bloody offering," to ransom us, and reconcile us to God, and "bring in an everlasting righteousness."

This feature of Christianity is also one of commanding interest, and is made most conspicuous in the Scriptures. It stamps the Plan of Grace with a lustre, a dignity, a divinity, all its own. You can find no semblance of a counterpart in nature, in providence, or in any other system of religious thought ever known to man. God not only coming down to man in the human nature assumed by him, but actually taking his place before eternal Justice, and enduring the penalty due for sin, and by the one offering of "himself" as an atone-

ment, satisfying the law, and taking the condemned sinner out of its hands, and conferring on him the liberty of the sons of God, and elevating him, by his subjective grace and Spirit, to a higher moral virtue and blessedness than he possessed before he transgressed. 'O the height and depth, the length and breadth," of this free gift! Life has been given for life, blood for blood, sacrifice for deliverance, suffering for salvation, in this scheme of salvation proposed to us in the divine Word. The gospel is not a scheme to *evade* the just and awful demands of Divine Justice, but to meet them squarely, and honorably satisfy them. It would be indeed *no* salvation at all, if this were not so. If God should show Mercy at the expense of Justice; if the sinner should get into heaven in a way to cast reproach on the Law of eternal Rectitude, it had been infinitely better that every child of Adam had been left to his terrible fate. Nay, the government of God could not stand under such a blow, and every throne in heaven would totter and fall. But the peculiar, the wondrous, glory of Christianity is, that all the attributes of God, law and gospel, justice and mercy, conspicuously *harmonize* in it, are even exalted and honored by it. Here, and nowhere beside in all God's kingdom, "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." Ps. 85: 10.

And how ought this fact to affect our hearts, and have a controlling influence over our entire life! We "are redeemed, not with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ." He who solicits our allegiance, our hearts, our service, solicits them, all and entire, as a free-will offering on our part, on the broad and solid ground, that he has done more than this for us—has given "himself," freely and voluntarily made the greatest gift, the greatest sacrifice, that a creature, or even God himself, can ever make. His claim upon us, therefore, is a reasonable claim, it is the highest possible claim, it is a claim enforced by every motive and consideration that can be supposed to move a rational soul. And we cannot evade or refuse to honor that claim, always, everywhere, and to the fullest extent of our capacity and opportunity, and not sin greatly; sin not only against law and authority, but sin against redeeming obligations of the weight-

iest, and most sacred character. Can we give or do *too much* for One who has given "*himself*" for us? Shall we measure, or stint our service, in the cause of such a Master? Can we keep back our inmost heart, our choicest gifts of intellect, or treasure, or any measure of sacrifice which gratitude may suggest, or human nature be able to endure?

Note, thirdly, the *end* or *object* of this free and wondrous sacrifice. "That he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." This is remarkable language. It needs careful study to bring out its full meaning and significance. The popular mind is apt to make, does make, a grand mistake just here. Those especially who take low views of man's sinful nature, who fail to see its radical corruption, its deep-seated, inveterate, and universal depravity, are sure to err on this fundamental point. They fail to comprehend the *moral* necessity of the case - the *moral* character and significance of the gospel. Contemplating man as only slightly deranged in his intellectual and moral nature, and needing only culture, and pruning, and striving on his part, in order to enter into life, they totally fail to comprehend the *real* object of Christ's death, the *true* character of that system which God is using for the recovery and final salvation of men. They recognize in Christ no RADICAL REFORMER of human nature, laying "the ax at the root" of our carnal nature; no grand PURIFIER, asserting, in awful majesty, "Ye must be born again:" "Except a man be born again he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven;" "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." In the light of such teaching, lopping off a branch here, and pruning the tree a little there, and applying washings and outward purifications, and preaching and trusting in a sublimated morality, will be seen to be superficial and trifling.

The radical, all-permeating idea of Christianity is that of MORAL PURIFICATION—a moral change, so thoroughly universal as to be equivalent to a second birth, a new creation. This idea runs through almost every chapter and verse of the Bible, especially the New Testament. It is presented in every variety of form and expression. Language is taxed to its utmost

to impress it upon us. Now it is "putting off the old man with his deeds, and putting on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge." Then it is "crucifying the world, the flesh and the devil," and "putting on Christ." Now it is "the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost." And then, again, "that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people." "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their *sins*." And so on to the end of the inspired testimony. The one aspect which distinguishes Christianity from all other systems of religious thought, and raises it infinitely superior to them all, is, its MORAL character. It reveals a God of infinite holiness. It reveals a system of spiritual truths absolutely pure and untainted by the slightest touch of defilement. It exhibits a Saviour of absolute moral perfection, even in the judgment of the bitterest enemies of Christianity. It proposes a scheme of salvation that aims at a grand universal purification, as essential to its blessing: a system of doctrines, and rules of living absolutely perfect, and which, if lived up to, will make every man a saint and earth a very paradise. Christianity does not lower one iota the standard of God's moral law; it rather honors, elevates, and enforces that law, in the sight of the whole intelligent universe. It is not the scheme of a sentimentalist, or of a *doctrinaire*, or of a superficial reformer. Its principles go to the very root of the matter. Its scope embraces all the elements which enter into the problem. The end it proposes is worthy of the Infinite Mind, and is in consonance with his moral administration. The work it accomplishes, in man, and for man, and upon man, leaves nothing undone—nothing that elevates, and perfects, and finally glorifies the nature of man, and more than restores him to his pristine state.

If men are *not* "saved from their sins," therefore, it is not the fault of *Christianity*. Religion is not responsible for the great and manifold imperfections and sins of God's people, which wicked men carp about so continually. If that religion, in its divine spirit, and teachings, and principles, were only fairly *lived up to*, by those who profess it, every Christian would be morally perfect, and the Church of Christ on earth

would resemble the church above. Not one sin, not one fault, not one imperfection of the Christian, finds the slightest countenance, the least excuse or palliation, either in the life of its Divine Founder, or in His teachings, or in one solitary provision or principle of the system. This is certainly very extraordinary. It is most emphatic and undeniable evidence of the Divine origin of Christianity, and of the inspiration and authenticity of the Holy Scriptures which reveal it to men. And we cannot afford to lose sight of this grand, and supreme feature of Christ's Redemptive work. It demonstrates the radical character, and the radical relations of the work of man's redemption to the other works of God, to the universal system of being, and of God's moral government. It likewise shows us the necessity of a clear and thorough comprehension of the principles and ends of that moral Kingdom which Christ came to set up in the hearts of men, and in the world, the "moral uses" of which are so grand, and are to affect so materially the everlasting state of the heavenly world.

Christ came to make men *holy*, "even as God is holy." He gave himself a sacrifice unto death in order to "purify" them. His atonement had special reference to this end. To save men *in* their sins, would be no salvation at all. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." The cross is a stupendous motive why men should *not* sin; it is Heaven's remonstrance and outcry against sin. It is *more*—even the power of God to set men free from its thraldom—to break the galling yoke of bondage to it, and bring men forth into liberty, the liberty of the sons of God—to new-create the soul into the moral image of Christ. It is likewise the basis and warrant of the Holy Spirit's regenerating and purifying work. The gospel contemplates nothing short of this. Not an outward reformation simply, not a pure and exalted morality merely, which so many preach and trust in. But an inward, total, *change* of the moral nature, so that "old things shall pass away, and behold all things are become new." It aims, steadily and constantly, at this result, viz., *personal holiness*, as the requisite of salvation. It seeks, by every motive by every agency, to prevail on men "to break off their sins by righteousness, and their iniquities by turning unto the Lord."

The gospel, observe, spares *no sin*. Christ gave "himself for us that he might redeem us from *all* iniquity." We cannot be partakers of his salvation while we hold on to sin in any form, or in any measure. There must be a *total* and hearty renunciation of the "accursed thing." Jesus is a complete Saviour. His blood cleanseth from all sin. "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world." His righteousness is a perfect righteousness. His truth makes thorough work—enlightening the understanding, informing the conscience, renewing the affections, subduing the will, and changing the whole current of life—imparting new motives, new principles of action, and inducing entire consecration to the high ends of the gospel. Christ is as much a purifier as a redeemer. All the washings and purifications of the Jewish law pointed to this. His people must be a "holy" people, whatever else they may lack—purged from all uncleanness, and morally fitted to be the associates of angels in the holy society of the heavenly world. "Sanctification of the Spirit," is just as indispensable a part of salvation, as the "justifying righteousness of Christ."

Note, fourthly, that the subjects of the gospel are a peculiar people, *not by accident, but in the purpose of God*. It was the very object Christ had in view when he gave himself for them. And this peculiarity is not a superficial or transient thing. It is radical, it is conspicuous, it is universal, it pertains to the whole man; to his motives, to his principles, to his character, to his life; and it is abiding, a growing peculiarity, conforming him more and more to the type of the heavenly state, to the divine unity of the Spirit, in moral characteristics and destiny. The peculiarity of the saints will be manifest even in heaven, and will make them the admiration and study of angels.

1. Christ's redeemed ones are seen to be a peculiar people if we *contrast them with the moral state of the world in which they live*. The moral world is polluted by reason of sin. It is a scene of terrible depravity. "The Devil and his angels" were cast down into it when expelled from heaven Satan's "seat"

is here,—all the elements of hell let loose upon man! Here sin has rioted and reigned for sixty centuries. The whole atmosphere we breathe is loaded with moral impurity. The very ground is "cursed" for sin's sake. "Evil and only evil, and that continually," is the law of this entire earthly system. And yet in this "sink of iniquity," in this moral "pest-house," Christ has planted His Kingdom, and is gathering a people to his praise. Here He is carrying forward the grandest reformation the universe ever beheld. Out of such materials He is training subjects for the heavenly glory. It is a living miracle of most wondrous grace,—the gathering and sustaining, through all the ages of time, of a Church of holy men and women out of and in such a society, and in spite of all the malign influences which Satan exerts over man, in addition to his inherent depravities. It will be the wonder of eternity.

Although *in* the world Christ's people are not *of* the world. The world did not beget them. They are of a higher, diviner origin. The spirit, and the character of Christ, their Teacher, Saviour, and Exemplar, shine forth in them. Their manner of life marks them as a "peculiar" people; as belonging to quite another kingdom. Grace has made them to differ, essentially, from all their surroundings and associates in life; has raised them superior to "the world, the flesh, and the devil." The Church of God is a pure, broad stream of moral life and purity, flowing through this world of sin and impurity, fed by unseen supplies, and mingling not in the least degree with the putrid waters of earth.

2. Christ's people are peculiar in respect to *the people with whom they mingle*. They may speak the same language, be members of the same family, or congregation, live on the same plane of society, and in all outward respects, be similar to others. And yet they are essentially *different*. In the sight of God, who looks at the heart, and not at appearances, the character, the moral being, and not at the mere accidents of life, there is not one trait in common; and the whole drift of things is in opposite directions. It is not only in an evil *world*, cursed, and blighted, and defiled, that Christ maintains his Kingdom of righteousness and purity; but in a *society*, depraved in

every element and feature of it—a society totally alienated from God and moral goodness, whose ways, whose forces, whose sentiments, whose aims, are all low, selfish, sensual, impure, and not unfrequently, even devilish. In such a *world*, whose whole tendency is to evil; in such a *society*, given over to work all manner of wickedness, hating God, and hating holiness, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is found adequate to the mighty task of cleansing the fountain of human guilt in the soul of man—of separating him from the surrounding mass of corruption and death—of lifting his whole being out of his moral degradation and ruin, and training and fitting him for companionship with angels in the future life.

So apparent and marked are the "peculiar" traits of Christ's people, that observation has never failed to discover them. As much as sin tends to blind men's eyes to moral truth, and to prejudice their judgment, to the credit of human nature, it must be admitted, that the world has often "taken knowledge of" Christ's disciples, "that they have been with" the Galilean, and speak his language, and follow his ways. Some of the most touching and remarkable eulogisms which Christianity has extorted from its enemies, bear testimony to the fidelity of Christians under trial, and temptation, and suffering; to their heroic fortitude and sublime faith, in the days of fiery persecution. Read Pliny's letter to the emperor Trajan. Read the records of martyrology. Read the annals of Church history, and even of secular history. Read the histories of modern missions. And draw even on your own observation, ye men of the world. Call up the sacred memories which hallow in your soul, a sainted mother, or a godly father, or a tender sister, or a faithful wife. Have you not, in the selfish and evil ways of this world, encountered, at times, men and women who absolutely commanded your respect, and confidence, and love! characters that seemed, in contrast with their surroundings, like pure spirits from a higher sphere! characters whom no corruption could taint, whose holy example was a very benediction and contact with whom, even for a season, left on your spirits the sweet odor of paradise? Blessed be God! there *is* a "higher life" even here on earth, corrupt and wicked as it is. A life hid with Christ in God. A

life that draws all its vitality, and sweetness, and fruitage, from above—a life, not of the earth earthy, but of heaven heavenly.

By the gift of "himself," not simply as an example, but as the groundwork of all necessary grace and power from above, Christ has secured to his own moral uses, and to "the praise of the glory of his grace," a "peculiar" people, to bear testimony for him here, and to share in the rewards of his kingdom hereafter. In their aims, in their principles, in their lives, in their hopes, they show to the world that they are not of it, are above it do not fellowship it; that their rest and portion are not here; that they are "strangers and pilgrims on earth as all their fathers were;" they are only passing through it to join their associates in heaven. The maxims of this world do not govern them. The low range of earthly good does not satisfy them. The spirit of this world chills and depresses them. The life of the world, wholly given to pleasure, to mammon, or to lust, is painful, even abhorrent to their better natures. They cannot rest in the transient. They dare not build their hopes on the sand. Sin, life, death, judgment, eternity, heaven, and hell, are to them tremendous realities. And Christ only can solve these problems for them, and work out a destiny for the great Future such as they are willing to accept. O have they not tasted of the vanity and emptiness of all earthly good! Has not insatiate death despoiled them of all that was fairest and choicest to their hearts! Over a thousand experiences of an earthly character, is it any wonder that the child of the heavenly King should sometimes sigh for the hour of his release! should look up and exclaim, "How long are thy chariot wheels in coming!" The pilgrim is faint and weary: the way is steep and rough: there is nothing congenial in the life around him: his spirit is solitary and lonely here: the world is "a dry and thirsty land, where no water is." And so, staff in hand, he journeys on, and hopes soon to stand on the bank of the river, and have done forever with sin and evil.

What a *peculiar history* is that of Christ's people on earth! There was never such a history written or made in heaven. It is unlike the history of any other people since the world was. It begins in the garden of Eden, and stretches on and down

through all the ages of time to the end of the world and the last judgment. They have *always* been a peculiar people,—in every age, in every clime, among all nations, and peoples, and tongues, and in all the diversified conditions of life. God has dwelt among them, in the "shekinah," and by manifold other demonstrations. He has spoken to them, by the mouth of angels, in prophecy, and miracle, and inspiration. Mingling with the world, scattered among the nations and tribes of earth, they have never lost their identity, or distinguishing characteristics. Living in a world, and in society given to frequent and great *changes*, Christ's people are *un*changed, in a solitary trait of character or life. What they were in the beginning; what they were in the days of the patriarchs, in the days of the Jewish theocracy, in the time of our Saviour, in the dark ages which subsequently intervened, at the Reformation under Huss and Luther and Zwingle—that they are in this nineteenth century of the new era, in every essential particular.

They have, at times, waxed few in numbers, but "a remnant" has ever remained; "a righteous seed" has been kept alive in the earth. Nations, and kingdoms, and dynasties, have risen, and swayed power over the world, and then decayed and passed away. They have been hated, persecuted, "hunted like partridges on the mountains," slain with the sword, burned at the stake, crucified, as was their Master, imprisoned, tortured, sawn asunder. But they have survived, and multiplied, in the face of conspiracies on the part of princes, and governors, and kings, and emperors, to extirpate the race. And there are more of this "persuasion," more of the disciples of the Nazarene, on earth to-day than ever before in the history of the world. Yes: evil as the times are; low as piety seems to be and really is, in the church at large; faithless as numberless disciples are proving themselves in such a day of defection and evil—God still has a people here, a "peculiar" people; and they are doubtless more numerous than is apparent to eyes that judge from the outward look. In a time of seeming universal apostasy in the Jewish church, Elijah, the Lord's prophet, verily believed that *he* alone of the true seed remained alive, and Ahab and Jezebel were about to

kill him. But God rebuked his unbelief, and assured him that there were "seven thousand souls" true to him, who had not bowed the knee to Baal. And were it to be that some tremendous persecution should suddenly be sprung upon the church in this age of declension, and every nominal disciple were compelled to show his true colors, and the test of discipleship should once more be martyrdom; I doubt not that the sword of faith would leap from a million scabbards, now grown rusty from disuse, and taking their lives in their hands, the soldiers of the Cross would go forth, at the call of duty, to prison, or to torture, or to death; and go joyfully, exultingly, counting it an honor to "suffer the loss of all things," and even death itself, for the Master, the great Captain of our salvation, the blessed Jesus, who loved them, aliens and enemies though they were, and died on the cross to save them.

3. Christ's redeemed ones are a "peculiar" people *in contrast with angels.* Not in moral character, for in this respect they will be alike in heaven, however unlike, in degree, while the saints tabernacle in the flesh. But in all other particulars they will be very unlike. They belong to quite another order of creatures. They exist under very dissimilar conditions. Their capacities are far from being the same. Their histories are totally different. Their title to heaven rests on quite another basis. And, though they will come together in heaven at last as one family, and be joined by common ties and interests, yet even *there* the subjects of Christ's saving grace will be distinguished from angels, and from all other orders of intelligences, and distinguished in a way and degree that will put special and great honor upon Him who achieved their redemption. These moral peculiarities will be eminently *suggestive.* They will illustrate, in myriad forms of moral beauty and life, the glory of the Redeemer, the wondrous efficacy of his grace, the merit of that atoning sacrifice which wrought out such astonishing results; and they will endear the saints to angels beyond the possibility of expression. They will form a new and exalted *type* of moral being. They will be a living embodiment of the spirit and principles of Redemption. Their identity, as the peculiar subjects and fruits of Christ's love,

can never be lost: it will be a permanent feature of the heavenly world. The impress of the Cross will remain upon them forever.

1. They are a *Redeemed* race. I see no evidence in Scripture to warrant Dr. Bushnell's idea, that the angels themselves have, in some unknown and mysterious way, been restored. Probationers they doubtless have been, and have been confirmed in obedience because of their faithfulness. But the *saints*, so far as we have intimations, will be the *only* race that has come up out of a state of apostasy to the life everlasting. And such an experience! Once they belonged to the fallen sons of creation. They were involved in the fearful evil and curse of sin. They have been restored from the mouth of the pit. They have passed under a baptism of fire. They have been subjected to a marvelous discipline. The history of the race has no parallel in all the annals of heaven, probably none in the annals of God's government. They have undergone a change, in condition, in moral character and destiny, greater, more wonderful and glorious, than ever before occurred in the sight of angels. The free gift of God, the blood of his beloved Son, shed on Calvary as a propitiation for sin, ransomed these souls, washed their robes and made them as "white and glistening" as the robe that Gabriel wears before the throne. They are now the equals of angels, and their associates; and all as a special act of *favor*. They are the fruit of Christ's travail of soul. They are there solely by virtue of his death in their stead. But for his interposition, his atonement, his renewing and all-sustaining grace, they had never entered the gate of life, but would have had their portion with the Devil and his angels.

This will be a very *conspicuous* feature of the heavenly society. The comparative number of saints and angels, we shall never know in this life. The number of each, however, will be great, almost beyond the power of numerals to express. Among the angels we may suppose there will be almost endless diversity in rank, order, capacity and attainment, and we know not in what other particulars. But the saints, one and all, will have some all-distinguishing traits in *common*. *One* badge will mark them all, *one* image will be reflected by them

all, *one* character will crown them all. "REDEEMED" will be written on every crown. "Prodigals" restored, will appear on every wedding garment. And rejoiced over by the whole family of God, will they be, with everlasting rejoicing. Their presence and life in heaven will be a *new* element there and will add a powerful attraction to it.

The saints will appear there, and will be glorified and kept in heaven, *on the ground of simple sovereign grace.* The angels having "kept their first estate," will stand there on a different footing. They too are infinite debtors to grace, but not in the like way, not to the same extent. For they have never fallen into sin, like Adam's ruined race. Whatever their relations to the Redemptive work of Christ, they have never come under its renewing and restoring power, nor need to, as have the saints. They are in heaven on the ground of personal obedience, having been kept by the mighty power of grace from falling. But no saint has any natural right there; nay, on the ground of personal merit he ought *not* to be there. And yet he has been *justified* before the law, and has as good a *title* to his mansion and crown as any angel or archangel there. There is no taint on either. Not a perfection of God has been dishonored in putting him there; not a creature wronged, not an interest sacrificed. Obedience, merit, underlies it all, is the warrant for it all. But that obedience and merit are not his *own.* They have been transferred to him, and made available to him. Sovereign grace has "accepted him in the Beloved." He is there, in the honorable possession of all the privileges and blessings of eternal life, on the simple, though ample ground, of "Christ's righteousness. The Cross is his title, his plea, his crown. *That* has put him there. *That* has made him the equal of angels in moral worth and dignity. *That* will keep him there, when sun and moon and stars shall have paled and gone down, it may be in darkness.

And this will be one of the *eternal wonders* of the heavenly world. Myriads, of the once low and defiled sons of Adam, made equal to angels, raised to companionship with them, crowned with immortality, and made a conspicuous and illustrious feature of the everlasting kingdom of righteousness and

peace. And all through the righteousness of One Person, and He the person of the eternal Son of God! The signal triumph of Grace over Nature, Holiness over Sin, Christ over the combined powers of Darkness, in the world, and in sinful man!

The subjects of saving grace will be a "peculiar" people, *because Christ himself will be their life.* Christ bears this remarkable testimony of himself: "I am the way, the truth, and the life." And Paul writes to the Colossians (chap. 3: 4), "When Christ who is *our life* shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Many other scriptures set forth this truth in a strong light, and under a great variety of striking imagery.

The truth is too grand a one for us to fully understand or appreciate, in this life. "CHRIST OUR LIFE." He is the author of *natural* life, of our *spiritual* or renewed life, and of our *resurrection* life. But more than this, by far, is meant by this class of texts. We cannot describe or explain it; but somehow there is a mysterious imparting of *Himself* to his people, by means of a vital union with him, which vitalizes their whole being and keeps it alive, spiritually, and makes it to bring forth fruit to his praise. The *principle* of life is in him, and as his people are brought into union and fellowship with Him, the life current flows out into their souls. "The life of God in the believer," is not the fruit of culture; is not simply a process of spiritual husbandry. It is more: it is a divine implanting of a higher life. As God "breathed into Adam and he became a living soul," so Christ breathes of his nature into the heart of his disciple, and makes him alive. Somehow Christ spreads his life out over all the redeemed family and reproduces himself, morally, in each and every member of it.

The *union of Christ and believers*, is one of the great mysteries of revelation. This union is of the most intimate and radical character; not a figure of speech, or a high sounding phrase. Less than a personal union, it is yet far more than an outward, or an official relation. Precisely what it consists in, I pretend not to know. But it is a doctrine of Scripture, and it is dwelt upon and magnified by it not a little. Paul and John are specially full of it. And although there is an

air of mysticism in much of their language, yet it conveys a strong impression of its reality, and significance. What means —"being in Christ," so constantly enjoined? What means the beautiful comparison of "the vine and the branches?" What strange assertion is that, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you?" And such expressions as these: "Christ in you the hope of glory:" "Christ liveth in me:" "partakers of his nature:" "he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit:" "members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones?" If these, and similar scriptures, do not set forth a union, so close and vital, as that the life of Christ passes over and into his people, making them essentially *one*, then I do not see how it would be possible to teach such a doctrine. The old divines called it "the mystic union," and as such it has come down to us in the creeds and literature of the church.

This remarkable characteristic will *distinguish* saints from angels in the future life. *Angels* sustain no such relation to Christ. His life is not reproduced in them. Their life, their character, will take on only that which is legitimate to their actions. Pure and exalted as their personal virtue will be, it will not have in it any of the elements, the lustre of *divinity*, as will the life and character of every saint, because they are REFLECTIONS OF THE ONE ONLY ABSOLUTELY PERFECT CHARACTER in all God's universe! The Redeemed family in the heavenly world, will be a splendid system of perfected, harmonious and glorified Manhood, receiving its entire life, and beauty, and worth, and dignity, and blessedness, from its Divine Head. All will resemble Him, as well as resemble each other, in moral virtue and dignity. One tie will bind all together. One sympathy will pervade the entire brotherhood. One life will flow down through them all, and crown them all. And the whole will present a scene of spiritual loveliness and grandeur, that will fill the infinite heart of Christ with rejoicing: that will cause the eternal Father to look upon it with complacency: that will wake and thrill every lyre in "heavenly places" with notes of wondrous melody.

Peculiar will be the *relations* of Christ to his redeemed

ones. He is the Creator, the Lawgiver, the Administrator, and the Judge of all creatures, in all places of his dominion. But the Cross originates other relations still, and relations more interesting, more sacred, more effective on character and destiny, than all others besides. There is the relation of a common *humanity*. Christ took not on him the nature of angels, but the nature of man. That nature is a tie, a bond, of a most sacred and intimate kind, uniting him to his people, as to no other order of creatures. He is their "Elder Brother," and is so presented to us in scripture. He is also their *Saviour*. They must ever look upon him as their Redeemer, to whom they owe all things; who has a right to them, and towards whom they must ever feel sentiments of the warmest gratitude. The language of the scripture I have already cited is very expressive on this point: "Purify unto *Himself*." The saints are his own peculiar heritage. He has a right to them, an interest in them, and is to derive a glory from them, *peculiar*, more sacred, as it were, and personal, and of deeper significance, than can be said of any other race. He redeemed them by his own blood. He purified them for his own service They are the "travail" of his soul. For them he endured the humiliation, "the contradiction of sinners," the agony of the garden, and the pains of the cross. He is bound to them in blood relationship. He feels towards them as he can feel towards no others. They are His by a peculiar right; His to love, to enjoy, to delight in, to rejoice over forever. It was in anticipation of this that Christ "rejoiced in spirit," while on earth, and thanked the Father. What infinite joy will fill the Saviour's heart when Redemption shall be all accomplished, and when, surrounded by "ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands," of restored, purified, and exalted saints, all glorious in moral beauty, because reflecting his excellence, and shouting his praise, He shall have fully entered upon the everlasting reward! His own special inheritance, they will dwell in his immediate presence, attend upon his person, as "a guard of honor," be admitted to sacred intimacy with him, as the beloved John was at the last supper, and share in a peculiar way, in the glory of his estate. Purchased at so great a personal cost; fitted for his use by so extraordinary an expenditure of

his love, and grace, and service, he will lavish upon them "the fullness" of his nature, and magnify and make illustrious, his own blood-bought inheritance.

The saints are peculiar in that their *eternal destiny is linked with the person of Christ.* Whatever may be true in regard to angels, the Scriptures leave no room for doubt as to the saints. What they intimate and shadow forth on this subject, is too wonderful for present comprehension. "Hath made us kings and priests unto God his Father." Christ is the "Heir of all things," and his people are "joint heirs" with Him. And what means that startling interrogatory of the great apostle: "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" What mean that class of texts which speak of their reigning with him in glory, sitting on thrones, wearing crowns, and the like? There is a truth shadowed forth in such teaching, whether you interpret the passages literally, or figuratively, too grand and startling, almost, for us to receive. So intimate is the union between the Redeemer and his redeemed ones; so peculiarly are they *one* in all their interests and relations; so essentially is the life and the destiny of every saint wrapped up in Christ, the living Head, that they may be said to "reign with him," to be 'joint heirs" in his inheritance in glory.

Into that Kingdom, over which the exalted Son of God is to preside and to reign for ever and ever, we are not permitted so much as to look, while here in the flesh. Nor indeed is it possible for a finite mind to form any adequate conception of its extent or glory. But we can form some faint idea of what must be the eternal state of the exalted and glorified Son of God. We know something of the Father's love for Him, and of the honor He has already put upon him. There came a voice out of "the excellent glory," as Jesus was about to enter upon his public ministry, giving emphatic testimony: "This is my beloved Son, hear ye him." And what a testimony came out of heaven over the scene of the crucifixion, when even nature bore such signal witness that it was a very God who had been put to death on Golgotha! And at other

times, God has signified to the world his estimate of the person, the character, and the service or office of the Lord Jesus Christ, in a manner of great impressiveness; declaring that to touch him, is "to touch the apple of his eye;" to slight him, is to slight Infinite Majesty; to deny him, is to deny Absolute Truth; to break his commandments, is to disobey the supreme law of justice and authority.

And if Christ has been thus honored of the Father, even in his humiliation, and all along the track of his sufferings and conflicts with the powers of darkness, what may we naturally expect in view of the *consummation* of the stupendous work! What the Father's testimony, the Father's blessing, the Father's reward to his "well-beloved Son," when that Son, coming forth in the morning of the Resurrection with "garments dyed in blood," at the head of an innumerable company of saints, all washed in that blood and made clean, and wearing crowns, and carrying palms in their hands, He shall present them to His Father "with exceeding joy," "having no spot, nor wrinkle nor any such thing"—complete in moral virtue, and equal to angels in dignity and worth;—what benedictions will Eternal Majesty and Fatherly Love pronounce in that hour! Now will have come the time when the Father also will "be glorified in his saints, and honored in all them that believe." Now will the auspicious day have arrived, when He who for so many centuries has travailed in the greatness of his strength, and in the bitterness of his suffering, to "bring in everlasting righteousness," will stand forth in the midst of the splendid trophies of his grace and love to be crowned with honor and glory immortal. And what a crowning will that be! What a "royal diadem" will be brought forth and placed upon that head, once crowned with thorns! What a sceptre will be placed in that hand, once pierced with nails and affixed to the cross of shame! And all will be done by the Everlasting Father, and in the presence of assembled worlds.

And, remember, Christ's *people* are to share in all this glory and reward. Even in that supreme hour Christ will have a tender care for his children. He will not be exalted

out of sight, or out of fellowship with them. He will only love them the more, because of it. Not one selfish feeling will spring up in that heart. It was not for himself, but for them that he suffered humiliation and death. And now that the great day of reward has come, He will draw the fruits of his work the closer to his heart, and cause them to share, to their fullest capacity, in His everlasting triumph.

SECTION II.

CHRIST THE ALPHA AND OMEGA OF SALVATION.

The chief end of the Scriptures is to reveal Jesus Christ as the Saviour of men. They speak but one name, teach but one doctrine, record but one life, glorify but one character; and that is the name, and doctrine, and life, and character of Him who came into the world to save sinners. This one Person they clothe with every perfection. He is made to speak as never man spake. On this one life is suspended the life of the race. His history is the history of Humanity, from Adam down to the end of the world. The doctrine of the Cross which he reveals, is shown to be superior to all the systems of thought which man has ever devised, even "the wisdom of God and the power of God unto salvation." The Character it delineates stands out on the sacred page as one of absolute perfection, the only perfect character in human history. To accomplish this end, every variety of language, and metaphor, and imagery is employed by the spirit of inspiration. Christ is exhibited in every relation in which it is possible for man, in his lapsed and fallen state, to need his services; and man himself is invited, nay urged, to cast himself, in all his sin, and woe, and helplessness, without reserve, and with the utmost confidence, upon this Divine Helper and Friend.

Christ himself puts forth this extraordinary claim in his own behalf. He asserts the divinity of his nature, and the di-

vinity of his mission: he declares himself to be "the Son of God with power," "the way, the truth, and the life," the "Alpha and Omega" of Redemption. He is the Father of angels, the Creator of men, the "one Mediator," the Judge of all creatures. In him is life, eternal life. And "there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we can be saved but the name Christ Jesus."

We know but little, if anything, of God, save as he is revealed to us in the mediatorial person, character, and office-work, of the world's Redeemer. "The light of nature," as it is called, is wholly insufficient to declare Him, except as we interpret nature in the light of the written Word. God's *moral* perfections are his chief glory; and nature gives not so much as a hint respecting them. God's *moral* law concerns us all infinitely more than the laws which govern matter; but nature never voiced it, even in the faintest whisper. Visible demonstrations, natural forces, and even mental phenomena, have very little influence over our moral and spiritual natures. Nature gives us not so much as an intimation of the Fatherhood of God, of the doctrine of a Mediator, of the possibility of reconciliation and forgiveness when once the Divine favor is lost; much less of an actual, and adequate, and accepted provision for its accomplishment. "Dwelling in light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see," it needed Christ to reveal God: to reveal his true character, his moral perfections, the law of supreme and unchangeable rectitude, and the relations of man to that law, and to the Lawgiver. And just *this* is what he actually has done. He came forth from the unapproachable Presence, himself "the brightness" of that unseen glory, and "the express image of his Person." He not simply declared "the invisible" Existence, but what concerns us more, he made known to us the *character* of that Supreme Majesty, his mind and will respecting us, and the rule by which we are required to live in order to enjoy his favor. So that Christ's own remarkable words are true: "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father; and why sayest thou then, Shew us the Father and it sufficeth us?" Not the person of the Father—for the person of the Father, and the person of the Son, are distinct entities—but

the "essence" of Divinity, in which they are one. Christ is God "declared" "manifested," not only in essence, but in mind and will, in power and glory. He manifested, declared, Him in the material creation which he produced. He manifests, declares him, in the dispensations of his eternal Providence. And most of all—more signally, and illustriously than in any other way—he declares him in his incarnation, suffering, and death, in the cause of human redemption. Not that Christ is simply a *manifestation*. For, he is a Person, as truly as the Father, and it is in and by his own proper Person that he executes these stupendous manifestations of the Unseen Diety. In Him the eternal Father beams forth in the perfection of his being and of his moral government, and holds converse with his creatures. We must look upon the great I AM, as he shines "in the face of Jesus Christ," or we shall be consumed by the dazzling brightness of His Glory. The condescension, the love, the mercy, the fatherhood of God, are brought to light *only* in the person and mission of Him who took to himself our nature, appeared on the scene of man's existence, and entered into human history, in connection with his atoning sacrifice and redemptive work.

Hence it is true—and the fact is one of stupendous significance—that Christ Jesus, the Lord, is the sum and substance of all that we know concerning God, the centre and substance of the entire system of revealed truth. The manifestation begins and ends in Him. He is the embodiment and representative of that Divine Essence which the Scriptures denominate "JEHOVAH," or THE "I AM."

It is only *in Christ* that we see God at all, and know him, and know the path of life. The only divine hand that touches us is the hand that was once nailed to the cross. The only voice that has spoken out of heaven to man in accents of mercy and love, is the voice of the incarnate Jesus. Heathen mythology contains not one true idea of God. Human philosophies have never found him out. Man's unaided reason is incapable of rising to the height of so sublime a truth. Nature is silent, or walks in darkness, until the Day-Star arises and flashes the light of the Cross over infinite space, and infinite worlds and systems of being. Divine Providence is a "sealed book"

until "the Lion of the tribe of Judah," breaks the seal and interprets. Human history is a chaotic mass of actors and forces, void of order and unity, and well nigh meaningless, until the cross is lifted up on Calvary, and all the events of time are read in the light of its revelations, and the ultimate and real end of Providence in human agency is thereby disclosed.

1. I have already intimated that Christ Jesus is the substance and glory of both *the Jewish and the Christian Scriptures.* If it were possible to eliminate from them all reference to the person, the office, the work, the humiliation, the sufferings, the teachings, and the death of this one Divine Personage: to annul every promise, every prophecy, every precept, every doctrine, every institution, every fact which specially refers to Him: to blot out every word, every description, every ray of light and beauty pertaining to that one transcendently glorious Character which illumines the pages of inspired revelation, and has waked the lyres of Judah, and the lyres of Christian Song in all the ages: to prune away all the truths, all the teachings, all the histories, all the principles, all the predictions and revelations concerning Christ's Kingdom on earth and in the future world—if it were possible to do this, how much of the Scriptures think you would remain? and of what worth would be the disjointed and meaningless remnant? What moral power would they possess? What rank would they take among the great systems of thought which challenge men's study and acceptance? They would be utterly worthless, utterly incoherent, dumb or lying oracles, and would cease to have any influence on human character or history.

If the reader has never given attention to this matter, just make an investigation for yourself, and sure I am you will be surprised at the result. Take your Bible and analyze it, from Genesis to Revelation, and see if you do not find it so—find that the half had not been told you? You have scarcely read the genesis of creation, before you come upon a divine *promise* —a strange, a wondrous promise, a mysterious and only partially divulged promise—but a promise, you instantly discern, of world-wide relations, of infinite significance, of measureless

blessedness, and one which is to include the whole race of mankind, just fallen before the seductions of the grand adversary, one which perpetually antagonizes the kingdoms of moral good and moral evil. One that is a prediction as well as a promise, and to be fully accomplished only when "the old Serpent" shall be crushed under the heel of a future Deliverer, who should arise in the fullness of the ages, and who in the last judgment shall sentence the Devil and his angels to the place prepared for them before the foundation of the world. Here is the first and only ray of *light* visible in the sky of that dreadful night which shut down on a lost Eden, and a lost innocence, and a lost immortality. But, blessed be God! that beam of light which shot athwart the sky and stood over Eden, came straight down from the Throne of the Lamb of God, and was the harbinger of that Sun which, four thousand years afterward, should rise on Calvary and flood, not the earth only, but all "heavenly places" with a light and a glory greater than ever before shone on creature vision.

That original promise trace down through all the intervening ages, and under all the varying dispensations, broadening and deepening, like a river, as it flows onward into the ocean of consummated purpose; now irrigating the desert, then beautifying the valley, and making Lebanon to rejoice. That first promise being renewed in the covenant made with Abraham and his seed, and enlarged again and finding expression in the tabernacle and temple worship, in the types, and sacrifices and offerings, of the Mosaic ritual, in the utterances of prophets, in the songs of David, in the institutions set up under the Jewish Theocracy – the testimony growing stronger, and fuller, and more significant as the day approached, and the Messiah finally burst upon the world. And his advent was celebrated by legions of spirits from "heavenly places," shouting, "Glory to God in the highest; on earth peace, good will to men"

And if you open the *New* Testament, you will find the four gospels, of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, and the "fifth" gospel, the Acts of the Apostles, contain simply the record of that remarkable character which appeared in Judea eighteen centuries ago, and who expounded to the people the Jewish

Scriptures, and grafted upon them his own super-human teachings. And after a life of unparalleled beneficence, and moral exaltation and grandeur, died upon the cross, and after three days, rose again and ascended to heaven. And if you study the epistles—the doctrinal life of Christianity—you find that Christ is the one theme, the one inspiration, the one life and glory of them all. The fourteen Pauline epistles, are the most original, the most sublime, the most exalted, the most comprehensive body of thought, of moral conception and philosophy, and Divine wisdom which the world contains. And yet "the Cross of Christ" is the one theme, the one burden, the one inspiration, the one glory of them all. And what is the Apocalypse, but a sublime vision of this same Jesus whose history is given in the gospels, and whose doctrines are so illustriously set forth by Paul and Peter and John, in the epistles—what is this closing book of the sacred canon, but a sublime vision of Christ on the Throne of the heavenly glory, administering the affairs of the universe, and receiving the homage and the praise of both saints and angels?

So that you find the thread of Christ's history running through every page of Revelation. You find the bright line of the Redemptive Life extending from the garden of Eden to the Cross on Calvary, and from the crucifixion to the last Judgment, and growing more and more luminous to the end. You find the dispensation of Eden—the solitary promise made to Adam and Eve—taking root in the dispensation of Sinai in the national life of Israel, in the ritual of Judaism, in the piety of patriarchs like Job and Abraham and Enoch; of kings like David and Josiah and Hezekiah; of leaders and lawgivers like Moses and Joshua and Nehemiah; of judges like Judah and Gideon and Samuel; and of prophets like Isaiah and Ezekiel and Daniel, until John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea and baptized Jesus at the Jordan. *His* coming in the flesh is the grand central event around which gathered all the thoughts, all the aspirations, all the economies, all the dispensations, all the sacrificial offerings of Old Testament revelation, until "The sacrifice of nobler name appeared." He was indeed—this same Jesus, who is the "Consolation of Israel" to-day, and the one hope of this lost world—He was the

one Expectation of the Patriarchs of olden time, the one Burden of the Prophets, whom God raised up, the one End of all the sacrificial offerings of the Levitical economy, the Substance of the Jewish faith, the Matter of the evangelists, the Doctrine of the epistles, and the Glory of the Apocalyptic visions. He is the one REVEALER, and the one REVEALED of the Godhead.

2. Christ is the Alpha and Omega of the *subjective work of grace in every believer*. This work is his from first to last. His atonement is the basis of it. His blood is both the ransom for the sinner, and the remedy for his sins. His righteousness is the sole groundwork of acceptance with God. His intercession is the procuring cause of pardon. His Spirit regenerates and sanctifies the soul. His truth enlightens, quickens, edifies and builds him up on his most holy faith. While his grace is over all, and in all, and is sufficient for all, and keeps him from falling, and finally presents him faultless before the Throne with exceeding joy. There is no salvation for any man, no matter what his character, or his attainments, or his professions, or his beliefs, aside from Jesus Christ. Salvation *begins* with him, and there it *ends*. No man can work out salvation for himself by any process of spiritual husbandry, by any amount of self-mortification or penance. All personal endeavor that begins in self, and rests and ends in self, or in any human device, is sure to fail, and fail ignominiously. When a sinner, seeking "the path of life," has made the entire round of self-righteous seeking, and of human wisdom and endeavor, he is no nearer, and may be a great way farther off from it, than when he started on the weary journey. The joint efforts of all the saints in heaven and of man, are not equal to the task.

This great work the Father has entrusted to the Son. "Him hath God exalted to give repentance and remission of sins." The groundwork of our justification, the grace of final perseverance, the wisdom which baffles the adversary, and the fountain which supplies all our wants, are all found in Him. Salvation *begins* with the first exercise of faith in Christ, and there it *ends*. Reason cannot aid us, philosophy cannot guide us, the history of the race cannot answer, when we come to

ponder the great question, "What must I do to be saved?" All the antecedents of Christian hope, likewise, have their root in Christ; and our title to a mansion in glory is only good in Him.

Christ is the Omega as well as the Alpha of redemption. He completes what he begins; perfects what he enters upon. He never leaves, or forsakes, or grows weary of those whom he has once called into his kingdom. "Having loved his own which are in the world he will love them unto the end." He will cleanse the soul from the last taint of uncleanness, and conquer the last enemy, and present his redeemed ones faultless before his Father's throne. And having gathered in the last of his elect ones—a multitude which no man can number—he will come in the last day to destroy death itself, and abolish the grave, and bind "the old serpent," and reward his faithful disciples, by putting them in full possession of that eternal inheritance purchased and prepared for them from the foundation of the world.

In *heaven* it will be seen and felt, as it never has been here, that Christ Jesus the Lord originated, carried forward, and accomplished the stupendous work of human Redemption by his sole sovereign grace and power. The truth will then shine forth in its fullness, without a cloud or a mist to obscure it, that it was simply the sacrifice and the power of the Cross, which prevailed over sin, and death and a broken law, and put every soul of that countless company of redeemed and glorified saints into heaven. And this great truth brought home to them as never before, and realized by them in all its transcendent worth, will give immortal life to their jubilant song: "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever."

3. The same is true of *the Life of God in the believer's soul.* By nature we are dead in sin, and no will or power of man can give us life. Our life is in Him—in its origin, in its roots, in its growth, in its fruitage, in its consummation. He alone has

power to raise the soul from the death of sin; to keep it alive, in such a soil, and in such surroundings; to quicken its growth, and perfect it in holiness. Until the soul is brought into personal contact with Christ; comes, by penitence, and faith, to experience the merit, and efficacy of his grace—it will remain estranged from God and destitute of moral virtue. And if a man once depart from Christ, or degrade him from his exalted place in the gospel, or suffer the world to dim his faith, he is morally sure to experience a decline of the life of religion within. This process may be all hidden from the outward eye; it may not be observed by our most intimate friends; and we ourselves may be all unconscious of it. Still, if "the branch abide not in the vine;" if inward faith, and love, and grace, be not maintained; if the life, the spirit, as well as the forms of godliness, be not religiously preserved, there is sure to come an essential falling away—a "backsliding" from God, that may prove perilous and disastrous.

If the reader of these pages has himself ever come into the life of the sons of God; has ever known the sweetness of an assured forgiveness; has ever tasted the good word and felt the power of the world to come, he owes it all to a personal experience of the grace of God in Christ Jesus. You were begotten *in Christ* unto this lively hope. You drew your *first* breath of spiritual life from him, and so you will the *last*. The very "germs" of this new life in the soul sprang from union to him; and from Him also must come all the growth and development into a completed spiritual manhood. No will of man, no amount of self-culture, can either impart the principle of moral life in apostate man, or make it abiding or fruitful. The power, the virtue, is all in *Christ*. It was when you looked to Him by faith that you first felt relief from the burden of sin. And it is only by a continued looking to Him, in the use of appropriate means, that you will gain the final victory. It was while bowed at the feet of Jesus, in penitential sorrow for sin, that the light of hope first shone in upon your soul, and there only will "full assurance" come to you. Christ is the Morning-Star that rose on your night of spiritual death; and he is the Sun shining into your heart "unto perfect day," if you will let him. Yes: Christ is the Life of God in the soul

of every believer—in its first beginnings, in its continued growth and fruitage, and in its final perfectness. Every virtue and every grace of the moral nature is from him. Every holy exercise, every gracious affection, every acceptable service, every victory over sin and the Devil, every attainment in grace, all pleasure in God's service, and every hope of glory—all these blessed experiences come from Christ as the fountain, or procuring cause, or efficient agent.

And being the "Alpha" of this new and blessed life, he will not fail to be the "Omega" of it likewise. Having once made us alive unto God by his grace, he will not fail to sustain and perfect that which he has begun. The "first" to love us; that love shall never forsake us. The "first" to prompt our return to God, and make the way practicable and sure; he will be the "last" to stand by us, and fight for us until our warfare shall be all accomplished. The efficient Cause in this great moral transformation; he will be the End of it too. He will finish it; impart the last touch to it; carry up the last stone with shouts of "Grace, grace unto it." And it will be an End, a finished work, worthy of Himself, and worthy of the infinite expenditure of grace and suffering put upon it—a consummated moral creation that shall be the brightest and the grandest of all God's works.

4. Christ will also be the Alpha and Omega of *the saint's final glory.* Heaven is not a separate, or even a supplemental life; it is the complement, the culmination, the ultimated and perfected state of the life here begun in the believer's soul. A grave mistake is often made by mankind, just here. We dissociate heaven from piety, from godliness, in the present sphere of duty and enjoyment, and put it way off to the end of life and beyond, and look upon it as quite another existence—a sort of arbitrary experience or special reward for our fidelity here. Whereas heaven is begun *here.* Its germ is the new life planted in the soul; and that kingdom or state of blessedness is a *growth* in the experience of the saint. And it may really grow as rapidly, and as grandly, *here,* under the varied, and often severe discipline of life, and under the husbandry of the Spirit of all grace, as if the soul were in *heaven* itself.

And it is possible for the soul, not yet freed from the body, to come essentially into the full "liberty of the gospel," and full communion with "the Father of spirits," and be made a partaker of the heavenly blessings of peace and joy in God. And also to be *conscious* of it, to know that his "Redeemer liveth," to be able to "read his title clear to a mansion in the skies"—as if he had already passed "the pearly gates," and laid aside the robe of mortality. The culmination, the climax, of that striking prayer, that remarkable experience of a saint of the olden time, as recorded in the 16th Psalm, shows that David had the true, though not the common view on this point: "Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fullness of joy: at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." The path of life was *here;* it was a present conscious reality and experience; and that path reaches from earth up into heaven; and all along the way of duty and of trial here below the "presence" of God yielded the Psalmist "fullness of joy," and afforded him a rich antepast of the "pleasures for evermore" at his "right hand" when he should have reached the other side of the river.

Now the same joyous experience in Christ in the present life, is open to every saint. Christ does not ask us to wait until we get to heaven in order to learn the nature, the tendency, the happy effect of his religion. He would teach us, by a blessed experience here and now, that true religion is its own reward—a conscious, present reward, kindling heaven in the soul the moment it is felt in its power—an inward witness, whose testimony cannot be gainsayed, sweetening every hour of trial, every service rendered for Christ; expelling every doubt and fear, and lifting the soul up into a region of perpetual serenity and sunlight, even beneath these skies which sin has darkened with angry clouds and tempests. But this experience—attained to by so few and yet possible to all—is found only in close and habitual union with Christ. Not one particle of it, not one hour of such an experience as David had, can be found anywhere besides, either in this life or beyond, either on earth or in heaven.

The glory of this life will be greatly enhanced in the heavenly world. The blossom which appeared here will ripen

there into fruit, and it will be "the fruit of the tree of life," fruit more precious that that which grew in the midst of the garden of Eden. The gray streak of the morning, which now we see at times, will unfold into the very "Sun of Righteousness," shining with such lustre that there will be no need of the natural sun, for "the Lamb will be the light thereof." But that supernal glory will be conditioned and governed *there*, the same as *here*. Christ has not two sets of laws, one for earth, and one for heaven: they are one and the same. There, as here, all fruitage, all blessedness, all exaltation, all growth upward into the angelic life, will be connected with Christ. The union there will be more complete than here, absolutely perfect. "The path of life," entered upon here, will there have broadened out, and trended up over "the Delectable Mountains," and reached "sweet fields," ever blooming in beauty and fragrant with the breath of life. The little rivulet, which, at times, seemed to be all but lost in the desert sands of earth, will there swell into a majestic river, and it will be "the River of Life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and the Lamb." O what glory, what blessedness, will there shine into the soul of every saint, and fill his vision and transport his being! Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive the glory of that kingdom into which Christ is transplanting "the trees of righteousness," rooted by Him here, and enriched with his own blood and grace, and pruned and trained by his own gracious hand for his use there. Into that kingdom too he is gathering all the moral treasures as well as beauty of the universe. And from it will be excluded sin in every form, and evil of every kind, and all temptation to evil. The gates of that city will never be shut. There will be "no night" there. And no sickness, no sorrow, no fear, no death, no imperfection, either in the natural or the moral surroundings, no weariness of the body or of the spirit. There will be no taint on all that life, no impurity in the air of that world, no stagnation in the currents of that exalted state. It will *always* be morning. The balmy breeze will ever fan the cheek, and immortal bloom, and immortal youth, and immortal strength and joy, will be there. No wonder that Paul, who saw something of

this glory, when caught up into Paradise, was not permitted to disclose it. We could not bear it here. We are not yet ripe for it. We shall *never* be able to bear it, or enjoy it, unless we *grow up towards it and into it here.*

The last judgment is denominated in Scripture, "the day of Jesus Christ," because that day is to reveal Him in the full and august glory of a *completed* Redemption, and inaugurate his Everlasting Kingdom. Then indeed will creation behold in the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world, the Alpha and Omega of all things: the Administrator of God's government, the Head of all creatures, the End of all manifestations, the Glory of all economies, the Fountain of all blessing. Robed in awful majesty, seated on the Throne of universal dominion, and arbitrating the destinies of angels and men and devils—there will be no doubt then as to his supreme Divinity. And woe, woe to the creature, be he angel or man, who has challenged his authority, or slighted his love!

Oh yes! Christ is *now*, in every believer's soul, "the hope of glory." *Then* He will be our glory consummated and realized. Grace begins with Him, and eternal glory shall be completed in Him. He who is, in his own Divine person and right, the glory of Nature, the glory of Redemption, the glory of eternal Providence, will be the personal glory of every believer. What a truth! What a theme! He rejoicing in us as his redeemed children, and we in him as our Benefactor, Friend, Redeemer. He the Glory of all things, and we his brethren. He the Light that bathes the universe in everlasting splendor, and we dwelling in that light and shining as stars in the firmament forever and ever.

If these things be so, it follows that *Jesus Christ is an indispensable* NECESSITY *to every creature of God.* For it is only in Him that we attain to the true end of being. Aside from Him we can answer no purpose of rational existence. Talent, genius, wealth, learning, fame, power, influence, life itself, all are vain and worthless unless consecrated to Him. All true happiness centres in Him. All moral goodness originates and finds perfection only in Him. His will is the supreme rule of human conduct. His power over all things is absolute. His blood alone takes away sin. "Out of Christ God is a consuming fire." Unless quickened by His Spirit you will remain

dead in your trespasses. The first Cause and the last End of all things, it follows, of necessity, that if you fail of his grace and favor, you fail in all that is essential to rational being and happiness, and forfeit eternal life.

And still multitudes of immortal beings here, under the full light and privilege of the Gospel of salvation, live away life and probation as regardless of Jesus Christ and as uninterested in Him, as if there were no such being in existence. They have never cast one look upward to behold Him in his glory. They have never prayed one prayer to Him for light and life. They have never thought of entering His service. They have not consulted His glory in a single act of life. They have never sought pardon of Him although they know they are sinners. His love has not blessed them. His Word has brought no peace or salvation to them. They are conscious of no interest in Him. They have laid up no portion in His kingdom. Life hastens to its end. Probation wears away, and yet Christ has received no glory from them. And yet, without Him, life is worse than a blank—it is a foul blot—and eternity will be a state of unending woe and bitterness.

O my soul! Is Christ thy Alpha and Omega? Do thy hopes, and desires, and aims, all centre in Him? Is he the Rock of thy salvation, a Tower of strength in the evil day? Is He first in thy thoughts each morning, and the last theme of meditation at night? Is thy very life hid with Christ in God? Canst thou say with David: "Whom have I in heaven but Thee, and there is none on earth that I desire beside Thee?" "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot." "Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

SECTION III.

CHRIST A SYMPATHIZING SAVIOUR.

It were possible to conceive of Christ's Redemptive work as a *governmental* measure, gracious in purpose, and full of wisdom, but involving no fatherly feeling, and manifesting no

pity or sympathy for man as a creature of infirmity and suffering. It were also possible to conceive of our Divine Deliverer as being infinitely above all weakness and infirmity, as dying for man simply as a *duty*, or in obedience to some high command, or necessity, rather than from the constraining power of love. This is the character God wears in nature, and in providence. But in the work of Redemption we see in him other attributes He here comes down from the throne of Infinite Majesty and puts on the tenderness and love of a Father, yearning over his wayward and prodigal children, and with infinite solicitude devising ways and means to lift them out of their lapsed condition, and restore them to his favor. He sends his own beloved Son down to us with a message of love and entreaty, beseeching us to be reconciled to him. And that Son's advent is heralded as a proclamation of "Peace on earth, good will to men." And not only does our Deliverer come to us with tender and loving messages from our Father in heaven; but He himself is the very embodiment of Love, and gives, in his teaching, in his character, and in his death in our behalf, a new and divine expression to the meaning of love and sympathy. He comes to us even as our "Elder Brother," and speaks to us in a human voice, and touches us with a human hand, and performs for us the tenderest, the truest, the holiest ministry ever bestowed on a child of guilt and suffering. He comes down to us in our *fallen* state, and actually takes upon himself our sorrows, and griefs, and sins. How affecting to hear the great God, whom we have so grievously offended, saying to himself, in view of the wickedness and stubbornness of his children: "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? Mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together." Hosea 11: 8. And what a voice is that which comes forth from the depths of Incarnate Love, carrying Heaven in every accent: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Christianity is not so much a system of Doctrine—grand, divine and glorious as that doctrine assuredly is—as it is a moral and social Power, having its seat in the very heart of the Godhead, and shining brighter and

brighter along the track of ages until it culminates on Calvary in the person of the dying Son of Mary. Christ may be said to be the actual embodiment of the great law of Love, which seeks to attract man to God, and bind him to his service, by an attraction that is stronger than physical forces, or governmental statutes.

That the Sympathy of Christ is one of the most conspicuous elements of his character, as well as one of his greatest attractions and sources of power over man, in his efforts to save him, will not be questioned. It is difficult to define just what is meant by this familiar word, *sympathy*. It is one of the latent forces of spiritual being. We cannot philosophize upon it. Like the gentle breeze which fans our cheek, we feel its subtle power, and are keenly conscious of its presence; but we cannot tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth. It is a mystery. But we all confess its power. It has flashed along every line of the soul. The electric wires ramify our whole nature and at the touch of the finger of God, the warm current passes over them all. There is not an *isolated* being in the world. These hidden wires connect us all together, and attach us all to that unseen Hand away in the depths of eternity.

Human sympathy demands of the preacher, the political economist, the parent, all indeed who seek to influence others, a closer study than it has ever yet received. There is a power in it, both for good and for evil, not appreciated; a power that it is well nigh impossible to resist. Man is a creature of sympathy. Sympathy will unlock the door of his heart when every motive and every argument have failed. Sympathy will achieve victories for us, over minds, over evil passions, and even over physical conditions, almost incredible. The life around us is full of illustrations of this truth. We look at great social changes and conditions, and see no adequate cause. We see one person leading, controlling, another, and it may be many others, and we cannot account for it. Now it puts on the subtle form of a fascination, and hearts are captivated by it. Then it brings out other forces, and minds are stirred and swayed by it as by an earthquake, or a "great strong

wind." It is that subtle, impalpable element of our nature which we call sympathy, working according to laws wholly its own, and beyond our philosophy to analyze or explain. In certain conditions of the animal, the mental, and social system, the law of sympathy is all but supreme, overcoming the will, and subjugating the whole man. It cements hearts so closely that no power can separate them. It assimilates natures and conditions very unlike, so as to make of twain one flesh. It breathes moral life or death over the soul, according as its nature is good or evil.

Now the mission, the life, and the personal ministry of Christ are so adjusted as to give the greatest effect to this social element in human nature. They bring down into Humanity the sympathies of the Godhead, and make them divinely effective in subduing, attracting, and winning over to virtue, a race whose social natures have been despoiled, soured, or turned into a desert. Christ has come down to us—all the way down from Supreme Divinity into our fallen nature, and fallen world and fallen condition, that he might put his heart in contact with our heart, and speak to us, man to man; speak as a personal friend, brother, and take upon himself our very infirmities, and griefs, and sorrows. Thus the Saviour comes to the sinners of our world in the only way that he can make himself welcome and available to us—down along the pathway of our actual sad experience in life—down into the lowest dungeon of guilt and despair, and flashes there the light of a Brother's countenance, and speaks there the words of hope and comfort. It is not simply pity, compassion, that the Son of God feels towards us—if that were all, alas! I fear we should repel him. But it is a "fellow-feeling," as well, a divine, all-penetrating *sympathy*, arising from a perfect knowledge and appreciation of our lost condition, and of the needs of our nature. Precious as the Bible is to the pious soul, there would have been something wanting had it failed to give us those wonderful words of Paul—words which have thrown up a bulwark against despair in millions of human hearts: "For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Heb. 4: 15.

"For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, that he might know how to succor them that are tempted." 2: 18.

Let us contemplate this element in our Saviour's character, and be comforted and strengthened by it.

1. The sympathy of Christ for us is the *sympathy of a common nature.* Simply as God, he could not enter into our feelings of joy or sorrow. Between our lapsed and sinful nature, and the perfect and exalted nature of Diety, there can be no affinity, no fellow feeling: there is no basis for anything of the kind except in the person of the "one Mediator." Sin has entirely alienated the creature from the Creator, and destroyed the very foundation of friendly intercourse. God can no longer look upon man, although the creature of his own hand, with complacency: there is an infinite moral distance separating them. But the Son of God meets the difficulty, which seems insuperable, by bringing the two natures together in one, and thereby bridging the awful chasm, and reopening communication. He comes down into fallen Humanity, and in the very nature which sin had laid waste, and alienated, and cursed, strikes deep the roots of the Divine nature. By one amazing stretch of mercy and condescension, he lifts a fallen world up into the very light and fellowship of Heaven, and opens upon it the sealed fountains of life. He took not on himself the nature of angels, for the reason that only in the identical nature which sin had debased, and dragged down to ruin, could he stay the tide of evil, and begin the work of restoration. "He took on Him the seed of Abraham"—our very flesh and blood, a human body and a human soul—and thereby intimately identified himself with us, and forever linked his own being and destiny with ours.

The Saviour, who seeks to win our love, is not more divine than human. We love to think of Him as God, radiant with absolute Divinity, exalted at the right hand of the Father, to whom all power is given. Human nature demands a Divine Saviour, and can rest in no other. His Divinity is the sheet-anchor of hope. But we love also to think of Christ as a *man*, living in a state of probation, living as we live under the curse of a broken law, and passing under all the conditions to which we are subject. We love to contemplate him in his earthly

history, from the time he lay a helpless infant in his mother's arms, until he bowed his head upon the cross and gave up the ghost. We love to dwell on the relations which he filled in life—the interest he evinced in his friends, his nation, and the race; and to follow him, as he goes about through the cities and villages of Galilee, and Samaria, continually doing good, his heart ever warm and loving, his lips discoursing words of infinite tenderness, and his hands ever ready to heal and bless all who came unto Him. Here, on this field, we get personally very *nigh* to Jesus, we touch the very hem of his garment, we come into actual contact with him, as John did when he reclined his head on his breast at the last supper; we come into a sphere all alive with a divine sympathy, and instinct with the power of a wonderful attraction. Oh! it is not the cold pity of one far above us: it is not the sympathy of a stranger, or a far-off being, which we feel kindling upon us—coming to us sometimes in the visions of the night, and sometimes in the fierce conflicts of the day, to cheer and sustain our fainting soul—No: it is the sympathy of our "Elder Brother," always within reach of us, between whom and us there exist the ties and feelings of a common nature: the genuine, all-sufficient sympathy of one who can enter into our inmost being, and who knows our every need, and who, from his abundant fullness, is able to mete out a gracious supply – even to flood our hearts and lives with the warm, fresh, living current of his own being.

2. The sympathy of Christ is *the sympathy of a common condition.* Equality of condition, as well as of nature, is essential to the most effective sympathy. The king and the subject cannot sympathize to any extent, one with the other. Nor the rich and the poor, the learned and the illiterate, the always healthy with the confirmed invalid, the bold with the timid, the man of iron nerves with a woman of exceeding delicate and nervous organization. The one class do not, cannot, appreciate the feelings of the other. There is so great a dissimilarity in the structure of their natures, or in the circumstances and surroundings of their lives, that it is simply impossible for them mutually to understand and assimilate. And there is no

power, in law or gospel, in society or personal culture, to bring together elements so dissimilar, and make of them a harmonious and perfect life.

Take, for instance, a man born and bred in affluence, whose every want and wish has been gratified, and whose life has known no care, or toil, or anxiety, concerning worldly sustenance. What does such a man really know of the burdens which the poor man has to carry, the anxieties which corrode him, the temptations which knock, day and night, at the door of his heart, and the woes and bitterness of his lot? Absolutely nothing; no more than if they were not of the same race. Such is the difference in their allotments, in the whole circle of their experiences, that there is and can be no real coming together. You must equalize their outward condition at least, before you can secure anything like sympathy, or assimilation.

This inequality of condition is a bar to social union and sympathy among the various classes which compose society, the body politic—and it is a bar of so serious a nature that no political economy has ever been able to overcome it. Indeed, one of the greatest *dangers* which menaces society to-day—and the danger is more and more imminent, and is putting on more alarming proportions each day—arises from this very cause. And what is most noteworthy is, that the *cause* is intensified and made more potential with every decade of years. Our boasted "progress"—our nineteenth century "civilization"—instead of curing, or at least materially lessening this social and political evil, as it naturally might be supposed to do, only increases the disease, augments the evil, brings on a more serious and wide-spread conflict, and covers the sky of the Future with darker and more ominous clouds. There was never before in human history, such a conflict between labor and capital, between the rich and the poor, between entailed rights in property and aristocracy of blood and rank, and agrarianism, as is raging to-day throughout the civilized world. Never before has wealth put on such huge proportions; so overshadowed all other earthly things; so trenched, in its individual and corporate power, on individual rights, and even on public interests; and so "ground the face of the poor," and

flaunted its pretensions, its tinsel and show, in the face of poverty and labor and want. No wonder the poor man, the laboring man, who can scarcely keep starvation from his door, begins to feel that he is wronged, oppressed, enslaved, by the rich class, by grasping millionaires, by huge monopolies, and corporations, which have come to run our legislatures, municipal, state and national; and to control, in a measure, our courts of justice, and corrupt our politics, until there is little virtue, or scarcely decency left in them. No wonder they combine to agitate, to resist, to denounce, such an unnatural, unchristian state of things, and threaten dire vengeance, unless their cry for righteousness is heard. And much as I abhor, and deprecate the whole movement, I begin to tremble when I call to mind that *Justice* is one of the attributes of Almighty God, and that "the poor," "the oppressed," "the despised," are the objects of his special care and protection.

No better proof than the present state of things is needed to demonstrate the comparative shallowness and worthlessness of modern "progress" or "civilization." It does not cure it only aggravates these ills of society. If it were real, genuine, Christian, in its spirit and elements, it would yield different results. And the trend of events now is in such a direction, and the forces gathering are of such a character, and the conflict is becoming so radical and bitter, and the enemies of order and invested rights, are growing so numerous, so insolent and defiant, and unreasonable often in their demands, that unless *some adequate remedy* shall be found, and found speedily and applied, there is no power in human laws sufficient to conserve society. There is a dynamite force gathering beneath it that will one day explode and rend it in pieces.

Now if we could conceive of a being, so elevated in rank, so gifted with wisdom and power, so clothed with goodness and grace, so overflowing with the milk of human kindness, so sympathetic in heart, and having the entire confidence of all classes—as lowly in feeling as the lowliest, and as exalted in rank and station as the highest, as poor in spirit as the poorest, and yet the owner of untold millions; a daily toiler himself, and yet a very prince—if we could conceive of such an one coming upon the theatre of conflict, and offering to mediate

between these jarring classes and giving the highest possible assurance of his fitness for such an office, and his power to bring about a reconciliation, and thereby conserve and bless society—would not every man have occasion to rejoice? Would it not be the privilege and the duty of every good citizen to thank Providence for such an advent, and co-operate with him in every possible way to bring about so desirable a result?

Well, *this is what Christ Jesus has done*, only on an infinitely grander scale, and where the necessity was a thousand-fold greater, and the interests imperiled were measureless. He saw there was no way to reconcile man to man, at perpetual strife; no way to reconcile man to God, at war one with the other, but to put his heart of love in direct contact with man's heart. And to do this it was necessary, not only to incarnate Deity in human nature, but also to bring his *life* in that nature down to the level of the lowest social condition. And this he did. And it was not an accident of birth. It was so fixed in "the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God." It was for a purpose. And that purpose was to teach the world that the distinctions which men aspire to and prize so highly, are vain and nothing worth, in his estimate And also by his example to put special honor upon poverty, a humble birth, honest labor and frugality, and to make illustrious his benediction bestowed upon these conditions of human life. It is surprising, to note the extent and significance of God's thoughts, on this subject, as they find expression in the Scriptures. The crowning evidence of his Messiahship, which Christ himself gave to the disciples of John, when they came to ask him if he was the Messiah, was in these words: "And to the *poor* the gospel is preached!"

Although equal with the Father, he took on him the seed of the woman. The Lord of all, he became a subject. Rich, he stooped to the lowest poverty. The glory of heaven, he entered the world in obscurity, came under the curse of the law, and subjected himself to all the conditions of fallen humanity. He came not in regal state, but as one born to an inheritance of shame and evil. Had he come otherwise than he did, the *equality* of our condition had not been perfect. He belonged to no privileged class. His birth and social lot identified him

with the common people; and "the common people heard him gladly," because he was one of them. He appreciated their wants, and trials, and grievances as no other teacher ever had done. He was their special friend and champion. How he rebuked those that bound heavy burdens on their fellows which they themselves would not so much as touch with their little finger! The common people form, in every age and land, the great mass of society. And hence Christ was born into this class, and lived and wrought with it, because it brought him nearest to the great heart of the world. And likewise, that he might show to the world that his interest in man had nothing to do with wealth, or station, or rank, or any of the accidents of life, but springs solely from his appreciation of the dignity and worth of the human soul, made in the image of God, and born to immortality.

3. The sympathy of Christ is, moreover, the sympathy of *a common personal experience*. He voluntarily took upon him all the conditions, and infirmities of our nature, in its fallen state. He has felt, both in body and soul, the joys, and the sorrows of humanity. He has actually walked the rounds of man's earthly experience. There is not a burden laid upon us which he has not borne. There is not a path in this vale of tears that he has not trodden. Every step we take in life's weary pilgrimage, his blessed feet have measured off. Not a cup does he put to our lips that he has not tasted. Not an enemy assails us that he has not encountered. He is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities," because he has borne them all. He "was made perfect through suffering." He has "borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows." He was "tempted in all points like as we are." He has himself endured the evils from which he came to deliver us. All that we have ever felt of the evil of sin, of the malice of the Devil, of creature weakness, he has experienced. He emptied himself of the fullness of the Godhead, that he might know the feeling of want and dependence. He put himself into all the conditions of our sad experience that he might gauge our sufferings and be fully qualified for every demand that could be made upon him. Nay, his experience was one of extraordinary suffering.

He was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." His lot was one of extreme loneliness, for who could know his heart, or impart needed sympathy and solace to him? Again and again was he constrained to invoke the ministry of angels. With a keenly sensitive nature, what pangs pierced his human soul! Alive to the tremendous evil and doom of sin, what burdens weighed down his spirits! Feeling a brother's interest in man, how he travailed in pain and prayer for his salvation!

What a record of his experience has come down to us. And yet it affords no adequate conception, either of the extent or the intensity of his endurance. He was "smitten of God and afflicted:" "despised and rejected of men." He "came unto his own, and his own received him not." "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." "I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there were none with me." He was known as "the carpenter's Son," a "Nazarene," a "Galilean," terms of reproach. He earned his living at a humble trade, in an obscure hamlet. And he gained but few disciples during his public ministry; and they were, for the most part, poor and obscure like himself. His own neighbors sought to kill him. His nation disowned him. The Jewish priesthood pursued him with relentless hatred. The wise, the rich, the noble, spurned him. His friends forsook him in danger, and he was finally betrayed by one of his own disciples and put to death as a malefactor, and blasphemer. Surely no man ever suffered in person as did the man Christ Jesus. And it was all for *our* sakes, that he might "know how to succor them that are tempted," and be able to apply sympathy, and comfort, and relief to his people in all times of need.

The sympathy of Christ, then, for his people, is the sympathy of a common nature, of a common condition, and a common experience. It is a sympathy deep as the human heart, broad as human necessity demands, warm and cordial as a brother's, true, full, and lasting as the nature of God.

We pass now to note the *use and power of his sympathy as an element of human redemption.*

1. We *need* just such a sympathy, as a solace to the heart, as a spur to effort, and as a ground of encouragement. In a world which sin has made so selfish, and so solitary and desolate, we need to be assured of a sympathy, genial as Mercy, sweet as life, true as Heaven, and full as infinitude. We need, in the day of sore trial and fierce conflict, the companionship of one whose "heart is made of tenderness," who has been baptized with a like baptism, who is able and ready to succor in every hour of need, and who will never leave or forsake us. Sin is a desolating, disrupting, gloomy force, and it needs just this element of divine life to counteract it.

Then there are ideals in life which are never attained to in human experience, aside from Christ. There are longings of the heart which earthly loves and sympathies do not satisfy. The demands of our nature are so great that only the sympathy of a divine and infinite friendship can meet. Who has not gone the round of his earthly friends, seeking the sustaining hand of an effective sympathy against some great despondency, or trouble, and been taught, by experience, how little, if any, they have to give? Our friends do not see things as we see them; or they are not in a sympathetic mood; or their own troubles absorb their minds, and we turn away disappointed. But Oh! man, any man, every man, has a friend in Jesus, whose heart is ever turned towards him, and is always full of love and pity for him; and fleeing to Him he will find his sympathy "a tower of strength" in the day of evil, a holy place of refuge from care and sorrow.

2. Note the *adaptation* of Christ's sympathy. Sympathy, as every one knows, is effective only as it meets the case in hand. Every man is marked by some peculiarity, of lot, or temperament, or circumstance. In all the world you cannot find your exact counterpart—a man fitted, as well as willing, to extend sympathy at all points. Our most intimate human friend can sympathize with us only in a few items; there is much in us which he blames us for and only tolerates. We have thoughts, moods of mind, joys and sorrows, which we cannot communicate to any human friend—we simply secrete them in the inner heart.

But the sympathy of Christ is perfectly adapted to every actual and conceivable condition of human nature. His eye sees the secrets of our heart. His feet explore every chamber of our soul. He marks every item of our experience. He has a divine perception of all the elements of our being, and of our history. Through whatever trial or conflict, we are passing, he knows all about it. He comes down to us in the solitariness of the heart, where no foot-fall of man was ever heard, and breathes life and sweetness there. He knows all that is peculiar in our experience, and applies the balm, when and where it is needed. He does not have to feel his way in the dark, at times irritating, and wounding, from lack of knowledge or skill: but he comprehends the whole situation, far better than we, and knows how best to adapt his blessing to our real and ever varying wants.

3. Consider again the *fullness* of Christ's sympathy. At its best estate human sympathy is limited. It often disappoints us when we need it most. Where we want much, we get but little, perhaps none. The deepest human fountain is shallow: we quickly exhaust it and are not satisfied. The heart is sore afraid, the soul is desolate, under some great sorrow; and all the kindness and attention of friends fail to solace us. But there *is* a fountain which is never dry, springing up in the soul a well of water unto everlasting life. There *is* a heart that is "touched" with every grief, with every fear, with every sad hour. There *is* a Friend who will cheer under every despondency, walk with us over every rough way, commune with us in the lowest depths of suffering, and comfort and sustain us under every burden.

While the sympathy of Christ is the sympathy of a man, it is equally the sympathy of a God. The Divine nature, which is so mysteriously united to the human in the person of Jesus, imparts intensity and fullness to it. It is exhaustless therefore as the Divine nature. It is ever full as the fountains of Heaven, and as sweet and life-inspiring. Does the reader doubt it? Be induced to make trial of it. Open your soul to receive it. Lift up your heart in prayer. Bow down in penitence for sin at the feet of Jesus. And the Blessed One,

whose tears have been wept over you, and whose blood has been shed to redeem you, will breathe down into your soul a sympathy and a love that will fill you with peace unspeakable.

4. Mark the *Patience* of this sympathizing One. Our best earthly friends soon weary of us. The daily repetition of our pains, and ills, and griefs, will at length excite only their impatience and disgust. Many a suffering man and woman, wife and husband, child and parent, has learned that it was best to conceal aches, and doubts, and griefs, even from the knowledge of those nearest to and most trusted by them, simply because they fear longer to tax their patience and sympathy. Pains of body, and mind, and heart—harder to bear than martyrdom it may be—are often borne uncomplainingly, borne in secret, and have never found utterance in human ears. But oh my soul! Jesus is never weary of the cry of want, or distress. I may go to Him with all my cares, and burdens, and perplexities, little and great, actual or in anticipation; I may go every day, yea "seven times a day," yea "seventy times seven"—(they are his own blessed words) and I may spread out my case before him, and rehearse every feature of it, and press my suit, just as if I were the only child of his on earth—and I shall not weary him, or offend him. He will not dismiss me with impatience. No: he will kindly listen to the last. He will enwrap me in the mantle of his divine sympathy. He will invite my confidence, and challenge my faith, and send me away with a blessing so great that there shall not be room enough in my heart to receive it.

Some one, I think Mrs. Stowe, has given expression to these beautiful words: "Many sensitive and fastidious natures are worn away by the constant friction of what we call *little troubles*. Without any great affliction, they feel that all the sweetness of their life is faded: their eye grows dim, their cheek careworn, and their spirit loses hope and elasticity, and becomes bowed with premature age, and in the midst of tangible and physical comfort they are restless and unhappy. The constant undercurrent of little cares and vexations, which is slowly wearing on the springs of life, is seen by no one—scarce ever do they speak of these things to their nearest

friends. Yet, were there a friend of a spirit so discerning as to feel and sympathize in all these things, how much of this repressed electric restlessness would pass off through such a sympathizing mind." These "little troubles and vexations," are the hardest of all to be patiently endured. Many a one loses his temper at a hasty word, who will command his spirits under the greatest provocation. One's spirits are often more depressed by the state of the weather, or by a fit of indigestion, than by the pressure of a great calamity. It is not hard work which breaks down, or wears out, so many noble natures: it is incessant worrying. It is not so much the *weight* of the burden which makes us cry out, as it is the *chafing* which it causes. It is not the momentum of the machinery which wears it out, so much as it is the friction So if the heart is not right; or if friends seem cold; or if one tongue speaks evil of us, it robs a man of peace, and worries many a one, of sensitive structure, into a premature grave. If we would learn to go to Jesus with these every-day cares and annoyances, which so chafe our spirits and eat up our strength, we should find great relief. He would give us patience to bear them. He would so adjust the burden as to avoid chafing. He would impart such cheerfulness to our hearts as would dissipate the damps and clouds which now so chill and oppress us, and give a heavenly sweetness to the temper. The sympathy of Christ would then come to be life's greatest solace—"the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."

Here is one of the *secrets of Christian power*. Christ is our example in this. The more of his sympathy we imbibe and impart to others, the more influence we shall sway for good. The Church must seek and embody this element of living power in her life, and give it a heart, and tongue, and feet, and hands, if she would attract sinners to Christ. Let the *missionary*, in far-off lands, know that the hearts of the faithful at home are turned towards him, and that incessant prayer is offered up for him, and what dangers will he brave, what hardships will he endure, with what cheerfulness and faith, will he toil in the Master's service. Let the *Pastor* know that he is borne up continually on the hearts of his people; let the sym-

pathy of the whole brotherhood flow out to him, to cheer and encourage him, and how sweet will be his work, how strong his arm, how eloquent his tongue. Let but the humblest laborer in the Lord's vineyard feel the touch of this power, and he is emboldened thereby and strengthened. There is power in sympathy to brace up resolution, to quicken hope, to lift the soul into a higher life, to touch the secret springs of action in the human heart, and reach even the social outcast, the drunkard, and the criminal, with the influences of a better life. Would you make yourself a name in heaven; would you pluck sinners as brands out of the fire that is consuming them; would you fill your sphere, in the family, in the church, and in society, with blessed activities? Act as Christ acts. Imbue your heart with his divine spirit of tenderness and love and pity over erring and lost men; and open upon them the fountains of heaven, and put your soul in immediate contact with them. Be not afraid of their contamination. Get down to their condition, low though it be. Seek them out in the retreats of sin and vice. Carry the Christ of the gospels, the Christ of the cross to them, and make them touch as it were but the hem of his garment, or come where his shadow will fall upon them, or a word from his blessed lips will reach their ears, or the breath of infinite purity will come in contact with them; and you will win many of them to virtue and to life everlasting, sure as Christ hath won you. What scoldings, what arguments, failed utterly to accomplish—only repulsed and braced up in their opposition—tears, kindnesses, gentle pleadings, Christian sympathies that will not give them up, will accomplish.

There is one experience of our Lord which is seldom thought of in its proper full light. Said the late Dr. Norman McLeod, one of the most eloquent preachers of London, and Chaplain to the Queen, in his last illness, "*It is such a comfort to know that the man Christ Jesus died.*" Yes, died as a man, as well as a Saviour, a "propitiation for sin." Had he stopped *short* of this; had he not actually passed under the mysterious power of death, and been an inhabitant of the grave, there would have been an essential thing wanting. Death and the

grave are dreaded and tremendous realities to us all. What dark shadows do they cast over life! How many "are all their lifetime subject to bondage through fear of death!" And from the grave we instinctively shrink back with horror. Naturally they are a terror, and if the Captain of our salvation had not in his own person experienced all there is in them, and dying, vanquished death, and abolished the grave, we could not approach them with calmness, or pass through the gloomy portals but with a shudder. But even *here*—along this gloomy and unknown path—*Christ* has been before us. His own nature has felt the chills, the damps, the darkness of death and the grave. His own heart has known the natural dread and dismay of "the supreme hour." Witness his agony in the garden as the shadow of death fell upon him. And for three days his body lay in darkness and silence in the sepulchre, with a great stone rolled against the door. So that now he is fitted to extend sympathy to his trembling child, as he stands on the bank of the dark river, or as he looks down into the grave opening at his feet. He has not only conquered Death and the Grave, by his kingly power, so that they have no power to hurt his people; but as a *man* too he has *died*. As our "Elder Brother" He has drunk the bitter cup, passed through "the valley of the shadow of death," and now, from the very mount of God, from the "shining shore," He calls us to follow him, to fear not, to be of good cheer. And hearing his voice, taking hold of his hand stretched over and down to him, the dying believer is able, in the last hour and experience of mortal life, to say to his soul: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod, and thy staff they comfort me." Ps. 23: 4. And as he comes out into the light, on the other side, you catch his triumphant shout, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be unto God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. 15: 55–57.

SECTION IV.

CHRIST THE REFUGE OF HIS PEOPLE.

One of the most beautiful and comprehensive descriptions of Christ to be found in the Old Testament Scriptures is that given by the prophet Isaiah: "And a man shall be as a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place; as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land," 32: 2. Here the three ideas are combined, Refuge, Life, and Repose. "Hiding-place" and "covert" mean, substantially, the same thing—viz., shelter, defense, safety, deliverance from actual and from impending evil. Jesus Christ, in this comprehensive sense, is the Refuge of his people. He hides them in the cleft of the rock till the evil be past. He shelters them, as a hen does her brood, when the tempest rages. He defends them when assailed by temptation, and covers their defenseless heads in the day of battle. Fleeing to this hiding-place, they find ample protection, and are made to rejoice in hope of the glory of God. No "wind" can blight them there; no "tempest" disturb the serenity of their souls. Almighty love is their refuge; incarnate mercy is their solace, and life, and repose.

1. Christ is the believer's Refuge in *the day of earthly disappointment.* Human life, in this world of sin and blight, is little better than a series of disappointments. Few indeed of all our anticipations of good here are ever realized. Many of our fondest and most sacredly-cherished hopes are blighted. Bright and serene as our morning sky may be, clouds soon overspread it; and before the evening of life has come, tempest after tempest has swept over us, and darkness and sorrow have gathered in our path. Smiling and hopeful as life usually appears in *prospect,* in actual *experience,* it is found to be a life of sighs and adversities: the curse of sin is upon it all. We hope for great things; we plan large, and toil hard; but when we come at last to die, how void and how vain does life appear! What have we accomplished? What have we to show for all that we have done and endured? How much of real good have we received from the world?—The sad truth is,

this world *deceives* men; it is not what it seems to be; it does not satisfy the desires and hopes which it awakens. The god of this world is the master-spirit of lying and deception; and he so arranges and manages the shifting scenes of mortal life as to keep up the deception until the last. It is only when the curtain falls, and we are left alone to retrospection and experience, that we discover

"What shadows we are, what shadows we pursue,"

in this world of intense ambitions and activities.

So it is with the man of *business*. His hope, his aim in life, is wealth. The desire of his heart and the purpose of his soul, are wrapped up in this one idea. And he engages in the race with confident hopes, and it may be with flattering prospects. His plans are laid in wisdom, and executed with ability. He brings to his work all the resources of an interested mind, all the energies of a devoted heart, and untiring zeal, and indomitable resolution. At times his fond hopes seem about to be realized; the goal that he has striven so long and so hard to reach, looms up to his sight; another struggle and he bears away the prize. And yet, after all, he *never* reaches the goal; all his hopes are doomed to disappointment. Untoward events arise—his wisest plans miscarry—efforts fail—expectations are cut off—life's energies are spent on a ruined enterprise—his heart is made sick by hope deferred—his dream of happiness, too fondly cherished, at length vanishes—and all that he has lived for is wrecked and gone! The history of this class of men, as facts abundantly attest, is little more than a history of splendid scheming, and hoping, and striving, ending in failure and disappointment.

The same is true of that class of men who aspire to earthly *honor, fame, or power*. They scheme, and toil, and tax every energy, and throw up every other interest to secure their favorite end. But the most of them reap, in return, only vexation, disquietude, and disappointment. The lofty heights of their ambition are never trodden by them. Life is thrown away on a forlorn hope, or a delusive expectation. Others win the coveted honor; others rise to the place of power, and they are crowded aside; and the man at last, dispirited, gives up the fruitless race and dies.

Another class still devote life to *study*. Theirs is a nobler ambition. Literary merit, learning, or professional distinction, is the reward they long after. They nourish genius, discipline their minds, and devote their best years to the acquisition of knowledge, never doubting that success will follow. They toil by the midnight lamp, and drive on the mental machinery, until paleness and trembling come over them. But ask of history, ask of all experience, the result. Alas! it is, for the most part, a mournful record of hopes deferred, claims denied, merit unappreciated, or at least unrewarded: wasting and fruitless toils, cruel mockings of expectation, tears of heartfelt agony shed in cheerless solitude, until all the sweet of life is turned to gall and wormwood, and all the fresh affections, and aspirations, and manly energies of the soul, are crushed or wasted. Where one aspirant, on this crowded field, really succeeds and is happy, a hundred fail in the effort. And life with them is one continued struggle with adversity and disappointment; and not unfrequently do they sigh for the rest and oblivion of the grave.

Consult the experience of the *pleasure*-seeking multitude, and they will be found to be no exception to the rule. Their world is the world of gayety, fashion, display, amusement, and sensual gratification. There *are* fascinations here, especially for the young—gilded drapery, the smiles of friendship, the tinsel and the music of life—scenes of dazzling splendor, hearts fluttering with excitement, eyes flashing with passion, and cheeks crimsoned with the flush of pride. And is *this Pleasure?* Is this the world of happiness? Is it here that the heart of man finds that solace, support, and enjoyment which it so intensely craves? Alas for earthly hopes! Over the entrance-gate of that world is written, "Vanity, Disappointment, Death." And the eager and thoughtless crowds that are continually pressing through that gateway, are but hastening to these dreadful experiences. Follow them a little way, and hear those heart-sighs of bitter disappointment, and see what great tears of vexation are wept by them; for the pain of wounded pride, the breath of scandal, the brow of care, the fevered pulse, the aching heart, and the sting of remorse, are all there.

It is a *fact*, attested by all experience and observation, that the great mass of mankind are really and bitterly disappointed in their expectations from this world. Scarcely one in a hundred succeeds, according to his hopes. Very many are doomed to an early and total failure. Adversity and disappointment meet them at the threshold of life, and they never retrieve their loss. And the few who *do* meet with success in the world, and are for a while borne along on the topmost wave of prosperity, are often in the *end* the most disappointed. For how many fortunes are made only to be lost again! How many honors are won which fade or are rudely plucked from the brow! How many objects of long-cherished affection or ambition are blasted in the first hour of enjoyment! And to lose earthly blessings when once we have earned and enjoyed them; to have our house tumble down upon us after all our pains to build it; or to learn from actual trial that ungodly prosperity is a curse and not a blessing—this is among the most trying of earthly experiences, and it is a common one.

Ye children of disappointment, there is a Refuge for you. The compassionate One, who has himself felt the ills of life, spreads out the wings of his protection, and bids you flee to the friendly "covert." It is a day of wind and tempest with you; but there is a "hiding-place," where the fury of life's storms never comes, and where the soul ceases to strive with darkness and disappointment. Your earthly hopes are wrecked, and you have nothing more or better to expect from this sin-cursed world. But oh! the God of mercy offers you eternal life in the Gospel. You are faint and weary, and ready to die; but there is a great salvation provided for you. You are miserable, and a blight is upon you; but you may yet be happy, and find rest and peace for your soul. Your life has proved thus far a folly or a lost adventure; but that life may yet know the joys of immortality. "The man" Christ Jesus proffers to you his friendship, and all the blessings and privileges which his blood has bought. He will not leave the soul to want, or perish, or sink in deep water, that casts itself upon him. Forsaken, disheartened, and disappointed in all your earthly plans and hopes, Jesus Christ will take you to his heart, repair all your losses, fill your soul with peace, and

make you a king and a priest in the kingdom of his Father.

How many have learned in the *day of worldly disappointment* the incomparable preciousness of Christ, and, ceasing to sigh after the world, have said, as they embraced the cross :

"Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly,
While the billows near me roll
While the tempest still is high,
Hide me, O my Saviour! hide,
Till the storm of life is past.

. . . . . .

Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on thee;
Leave, Oh! leave me not alone,
Still support and comfort me;
All my trust on thee is staid,
All my help from thee I bring;
Cover my defenseless head
With the shadow of thy wing!"

2. Christ is the believer's Refuge *in times of affliction.* This is a world of sorrow and suffering. What ills and woes are we called to endure! How often are we made to drink the cup of bitter anguish! What tender ties are sundered! What pangs of bereavement are felt! How the sensibilities of our nature are shocked and tortured! How many days and nights are spent in pain! Who indeed is a stranger to the couch of suffering? Who has not lost dear friends? Whose heart has not often bled with inward sorrow, and sighed over the wreck of its losses? Let wasting disease lay its hand upon you; let riches make to themselves wings and fly away; or let death enter your family circle and snatch away the desire of your eyes, and where will your smitten heart find consolation? This world has suddenly lost all its charms. Its glitter and fascination are gone, its voice is hushed, its wonted business and pleasure are a weariness, and you turn from it all in disgust and anguish to seek relief elsewhere, or to weep life away in sadness and darkness.

Now Jesus Christ is available to us in just such an hour. When the heart is heavy with sorrow, and the soul is made to lick the dust in the extremity of its humiliation and weakness,

and the world turns its back upon us, pitiless and helpless, there is a Friend who sticketh closer than a brother—one born for adversity. Jesus, full of compassion and sympathy, proffers the "covert" of his wings. Speading them out over us, he bids us take shelter from the storm. Amidst the darkness and fury of the tempest, we hear his commanding voice, saying: "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." Christ is an ample shield, and a blessed deliverer in the day of affliction. He has consolations sufficient to meet the extremest case. There is no human experience so dark that he cannot cause the light to shine upon it; there is no bereavement so sore that he cannot soothe and heal under it; there is no burden so heavy that he cannot give strength to bear it; no loss so great that he cannot make it good. "He sent from above, he took me, he drew me out of many waters." O precious experience! Courage, afflicted one.

We may not explain the philosophy of the thing, or be able to demonstrate it—but it is so, and that is enough: the soul that looks to Christ in affliction is wonderfully sustained; nay, is even made to rejoice in tribulation. The fires do not burn him, the floods do not overflow him, the winds do not uproot him, the tempest does not destroy his peace and serenity. Look at yonder poor *widow* as an illustration. She has been left, in the providence of God, to struggle alone with her earthly sorrows, and with bitter disappointments—with poverty, and grief, and solitariness. Still she is contented and cheerful, and the goodness of God is "her song in the house of her pilgrimage." Many a storm has swept athwart her sky, but yet the sunshine of Heaven rests on her heart. Her stores are scanty, but yet she has not wanted. She has learned to pray that prayer of childlike trust, "Give us this day our daily bread," and He who feeds the birds of the air, and the beasts of the field, day by day has renewed her supply. She lives by faith. In her extremity she goes to God. And around her humble hearth there are celestial ministries. The angels, as they fly on their errands of love, passing by the palaces of kings, the mansions of the noble, and the dwellings of wealth and plenty, stay their wing over that lowly cottage, and drop upon it the blessings of a contented mind, a trusting heart,

and a hope full of consolation and glory. The most contented and happy creature I ever knew was a widow of this sort. For many a long year she was literally helpless, and confined to her bed. But heaven beamed in her serene face, and flashed in her bright eye. And rebuked indeed was I, when I ventured to allude to her great afflictions. With quivering lips and tearful eyes, she said she knew not what affliction was: her "peace was like a river;" "God had made all her bed:" there was no darkness in her chamber, none in "the valley of the shadow of death." She was reposing in the shadow of a great rock.

O ye children of affliction! Flee to the man Christ Jesus. He is a "hiding-place" in the day of storm and darkness. He can so ease your heaviest burdens of trouble that you shall scarcely feel them. He can so sweeten your afflictions that you shall bless God for them. He can so enrich your soul by the fiery discipline, and so endear his grace to you as to constrain you to cry out: "It is good for me that I have been afflicted."

3. Christ is the believer's Refuge in the day of *Trial.* Many whose afflictions are light are called to experience severe trials. It pleases the Lord to make full proof of his people. He puts their love, fidelity, and integrity to the test. And how often is our weakness in this way discovered, and our sin brought to light, and the depravity of our hearts laid bare. It was through many and terrible trials that our Divine Redeemer was made perfect. How was his virtue assailed! And so it is, in an humble degree, with every disciple of his.

God tries our *Faith.* He hides himself in thick darkness. He comes to us in the way of inscrutable providences. He lets the devil loose to rage and riot in the earth. He forsakes his altars and rebukes his people. He suffers the wicked to triumph, and his cause to decline; and he humbles and afflicts the righteous until faith is confounded and can only say, "The Lord reigneth." He tries our *Hope.* He withdraws for a while the light of his countenance, and we walk in great darkness. He removes his staff, and we tremble at every step. A sense of sin overwhelms us. Conscience has power

to torment the soul. Temptation assails us with renewed fierceness. Our peace is gone. Hope seems ready to abandon us. And in the distance we see Despair in terrible form approaching. And the soul is shaken as by a mighty wind. Out of the depths it cries for deliverance. And who, save Christ Jesus, with his blood of atonement, and spirit of all grace, and words of heavenly sympathy, and shield of almighty power, is able to afford help to a man when his eternal hopes are shaken? God tries our *Patience*. With a thousand petty annoyances, which are hard to be borne, with disappointments, with reverses of fortune, with sickness, with bereavement, with the ingratitude and wickedness of mankind, with trials, nameless and numberless. And Patience is hard pushed. Many a billow goes over us. The conflict is often fierce, and we are ready to faint. The soul is tempted to repine and find fault with God, and to murmur at his providences. And none but *Christ* can give Patience her perfect work. He alone can make the human heart submissive under evils, and give it the victory in the day of trial. Touched by his gracious hand the bruised and chastened spirit gives utterance to that sublime experience: "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it."

He tries our *Principles*. He challenges our integrity, the sincerity of our profession, the genuineness of our experience, the reality and strength of our love, and our Christian fidelity and purity. In his Providence occasions arise which rend our mountains of strength, and disturb the great deep of depravity, and demonstrate to the world whether "the root of the matter" be really in us; whether we have built on the sand, or on the rock. And in the day of fiery trial, our only safety is in the "hiding-place" of divine mercy. The soul at such a time needs the "covert" of the Almighty's wings. All human defenses are vain. Philosophy is a poor comforter. Man can do nothing for us. The world is but "vanity and vexation of spirit." None but Christ is able to give the soul confidence in the day of great darkness - strength in the time of weakness—integrity in the season of fiery trial—and help it to stand unmoved under the combined assaults of earth and hell.

4. Christ is the believer's Refuge *in the day of Fear*. Sin is

darkness; and hence, wheresoever there is sin, there is gloom, and fear, and sadness. The heart of man, until visited by the day-star from on high, is a world of sighs, given over to desolation, and evil forebodings. The wicked man is a slave to his *fears*. He can never rise above them. They darken and torment his days. And even the Christian suffers at times greatly from Fear. No reasoning, no promise, no experience can expel it. It hangs over him like a dark cloud. It is an angel of trouble in his path. How *many* are his fears! He fears that he may be deceived, and his treacherous heart undo him: he fears that he shall fail in duty, and bring reproach on the Name he loves: he fears that he may come short at last, and thus have no part in the inheritance for which he has striven: he fears himself, he fears the devil, he fears the world, he fears to live, and he fears to die! Scarcely a day is he free from this feeling of depression. Often it distresses him beyond measure. He finds no comfort. He is afraid. He is a stranger to "the hope of assurance." His closet is often a Bochim. He wets his couch at night with his tears. The Mercy-Seat and the Altar are hung in mourning. He can appropriate no promise to himself. His heart is heavy and desolate. Troubled on every hand with fear, and continually writing bitter things against himself, he is ever repeating, while his soul is thrilled or riven by them, those favorite lines of the fearful:

"'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought:
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?
Could my heart so hard remain,
Prayer a task and burden prove,
Every trifle give me pain,
If I know a Saviour's love!"

And is there no *remedy* for this gloomy experience? Must the spirit of fear necessarily dwell in our hearts? Is it the will of God that his people

"Go mourning all their days?"

Is there no virtue in the blood of atonement, no power in the Gospel, to lift the soul into the region of perpetual sunshine? Oh! there *is* a remedy for this evil of sin. There *is* a "hiding-

place" to which the soul may flee, and from which this fiend is shut out. There is spread for God's people a sky which holds no angry tempest. There is a walk of Christian experience in which only Peace, Joy, and Hope are the ministering angels. Housed in Christ, what is there for one to fear? Who, or what, can harm him there? From that secure retreat he may look forth without dismay upon the troubled scenes of earth. The winds of heaven may howl their wildest requiem; the tempest may empty the seven vials of its darkness and wrath on the earth; the sun may be darkened, and the moon turned to blood; pestilence, war, and famine may rage; and all the elements of depravity and destruction may war together in a terrific conflict. But none of these things shall move him who "dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High." Nor sin, nor Satan, nor death, nor hell, shall harm him. "Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flyeth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee . . . Because thou hast made the Lord, who is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation, there shall no evil befall thee. . . He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honor him." Whether the calamity be individual or national, present or prospective, he has nothing to fear. If "there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations; with perplexity, the sea, and the waves roaring; men's heart's failing them through fear," he can yet sing from beneath the outspread wings of Almighty Love: "Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vine; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, and will joy in the God of my salvation."

5. Christ is his people's Refuge from *the torments of an ac-*

cusing conscience. The day of self-convicted guilt is a day of memorable experience. Our sins are now discovered and brought home to us by the Spirit of God. We can no longer deny them, nor excuse them, nor escape from them. We have sinned, and made God our enemy. We have broken his holy law, and incurred its penalty. We have rejected his Son, and treasured up wrath against the day of wrath. And conscience upbraids us for what we have done. Divine Justice demands satisfaction. The soul is ready to sink into hell. And what can be done for its rescue? How shall man be just with God? How shall a sinner escape his threatened and impending wrath? Or how endure the remorse and agony of convicted guilt? Will you *reason* the point with him? reason down his rising fears? reason away that sense of guilt and hell-desert, which has already smitten him to the earth? Will you attempt to comfort him with the assurance that God is merciful? or by reminding him of his own natural goodness? or by prating to him about philosophy? or by learned and ingenious speculations on theological dogmas? or by suggesting doubts as to future punishment? or by admitting the possibility of another "chance" in the life to come? Will either or all of these things afford *relief* to the trembling soul whose heart is burdened with his sins, and who from the depths of intense distress is crying for a deliverer? Ah! the convicted sinner wants not the unction of flattering words, but the blood of an infinite atonement: he wants not speculation, but certain truth: he wants not philosophy, but God. For he stands convicted and trembling beneath the frown of his Maker. Not a ray of hope beams on his wretched soul. Midnight darkness vails the sky. Doom and death are on the wing. The storm of eternal wrath is thundering along his pathway and he is exposed to all its fury. Help must reach him, and reach him quickly, or he is sure to be swept away into perdition. And *whence* shall help come? Whose arm can save the sinner in such an hour? Where shall he seek a refuge when pursued by an accusing conscience, and by the penal justice of God? Oh! none but Jesus, the Almighty Saviour, can shield and deliver man when conviction lays hold of him. His arm, and his only, is able to stay the descending floods. *He* can disarm

conscience of its sting, and satisfy the demands of justice. *He* can spread a bright and serene sky over the distressed and troubled soul and fill his dark and wretched heart with peace and joy; for his blood cleanseth from all sin.

6. Christ is his people's Refuge *in the day of final wrath.* There is nothing that men really so much dread as they do the wrath of God. Even the most wicked and hardened of men are at times greatly troubled by the thought of it. It is the *fear* of this deserved and tremendous wrath which robs sinful pleasure of half its enjoyment. It is the instinctive fear of this, which makes death so melancholy a day to the wicked, and hell so dreadful a place, even in anticipation. THE WRATH TO COME—the just, final, and eternal wrath of God - oh! it is a *reality*, and not a fiction; and it is *such* a reality that men can not be *indifferent* to it if they would. They may affect to disbelieve it, and in the hour of mirth and wine, sport with it; but they cannot get it out of their minds. It is a fixed fact, in thought and in experience—an unwelcome truth, frowning ever upon them—a mountain of unknown height, shutting out from their souls the light of hope and of life, and ready to fall upon them at any moment with the weight of God's power and sink them into perdition.

Now Jesus Christ is a Refuge also from this impending evil. He turns aside the anger of God; he saves from the wrath of the final day. "The cross lifted up on Calvary has received the thunder from the cloud, and now gives sunshine and peace to the penitent soul." God and the believer in Jesus are *reconciled*. The controversy which sin had provoked is ended, and the breach healed. Anger is turned to love—instead of an enemy, behold a friend. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." What then have we to fear? What is there *terrible* in God, to one whose life is hid in Christ? He is our FATHER. Christ is our elder brother. We are forgiven. Our name is found in the book of life. No evil can overcome us. Death will not harm us. The judgment-day need not terrify us. And beyond, there stretches out a sky which no cloud ever darkens, no storm ever disturbs, and which the light of everlasting day illumines and makes resplendent with glory.

Such a Divine and much-needed refuge is Jesus Christ. Thus is he set forth to man in the Holy Scriptures, "a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest." Disappointed by the world, he will be your portion. Borne down by the weight of affliction, he will sustain you. Cast into the fiery furnace of trial, he will deliver you. Burdened with the weight of your sins, he will give you relief. Fearful and doubting, he will inspire you with a courage which no danger can intimidate, and with a confidence which no doubt can disturb. Dreading God's anger, and afraid to die, he will comfort you with the assurance of victory, and will "hide you in the cleft of the rock," until the indignation shall be past.

O glorious Refuge! And it never *fails* man. It is never *shut* against the penitent soul fleeing from his sins and seeking life and safety. The winds of heaven have assailed it for sixty centuries; storms have swept over it; and floods have beat against it; but it has never been shaken. It holds out to-day the same sure hope to all who will be saved. It will yet resist the fire and the deluge of "the great day of the wrath of Almighty God." And when the winds are finally laid, and the waters are assuaged, and the sky is cleared up, and the fair fields of immortality are bathed in the full light and radiance of a consummated Redemption—then will the window of this Ark be opened, and forth from it will issue, with shouts of rejoicing and hymns of eternal praise to their Deliverer, a multitude which no man can number, saved from the evils of the apostasy, sheltered in the day of divine wrath, and lifted above the curse, to people a kingdom which sin shall never blight—death never invade—where there is no night—where one love fills every heart, one life throbs in every bosom, and one song inspires every tongue.

But how fearful are the condition and prospects of a soul away from Christ! without a protector, without a refuge, with no "everlasting arms" to shield and to save. And yet with all the evils and perils of life to meet, and death and judgment to face. My reader, will *you* be that soul? Will you live, and die, and pass on to the last judgment, with no refuge over your head but a "refuge of lies," which God will sweep away with the first breath of his anger? Up, up, and flee for refuge to

lay hold on the hope set before you in the gospel. Do it *to-day*. Delay it not even until to-morrow. There is evil, there is peril, there is death in your path, at every step. The hour is coming—it is nigh—when you will *need*, need more than human language can express—the friendly Refuge of an Almighty power. Already the heavens are gathering blackness over you. Already the winds are ready to smite, as they smote Job, from the four quarters of heaven: Already I hear the rush and roar of an eternal tempest. Up, flee, defenseless soul, flee to the yet outspread wings of the compassionate Saviour.

SECTION V.

CHRIST THE LIVING BREAD.

CHRISTIANITY is not a religion of form, of ceremonial, of taste, of sentiment, of exalted morality, and outward refinement merely. It is all this, but it is a great deal *more* than this. It is pre-eminently a religion of substance, of spirit and life, a religion of vital practical truths, of inward grace and holiness, of character, having in it all the elements of strength, and true manhood. Christ is not presented to us in Scripture as a teacher of fine theories, of a transcendental philosophy, of exalted ideals, of exquisite conceptions, of a beautiful exterior, and high adornment. He *is* all this, using the terms in their true and highest sense. But he is a great deal *more* than this, in his teachings. The religion he proposes to man is one of fundamental and eternal principles, having their roots in the Divine nature, and in the moral government of God—a religion that has its seat in the soul of man, there enthroning itself in the reason, the affections, and the allegiance of man, and thence swaying its power over his entire being and life, drawing all its nourishment, and deriving all its fruitage, from the Divine fullness, and fed on "the living bread which came down from heaven."

Christ gave his "flesh" for the life of the world, and of

that flesh every man must eat for himself or die. It is "bread" only that has power to nourish the human soul—the "living Bread, which came down from heaven"—the substance of the crucified One, appropriated by faith, and taken up into the heart and life of the believer. The occasion and the manner in which Christ set forth this great and essential doctrine, are recorded by John in the 6th chapter of his gospel and are worthy of careful note. He had just fed five thousand people, and the impulsive multitude were ready to make him a king. Perceiving their thoughts, he withdrew privately to a mountain. But the enthusiastic multitude sought him out. Our Lord exposes their motive in thus pursuing him: "Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled. Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life." Catching at his words, they respond: "Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven." Christ explains that the bread which Moses gave, was not the bread to which He referred, else their fathers had not died. "Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die." He then announces one of the most radical and glorious doctrines of the Scriptures: "I am the living Bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give, is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" was the cry of Jewish unbelief. Our Lord meets the cavil—and it is a standing cavil of unbelief the world over, and in every age, in one form or another—by simply reiterating the doctrine, with greater fullness and emphasis: "Verily, verily I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me shall live by me. This is that bread which came

down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna and are dead: he that eateth this bread, shall live forever."

CHRIST THE LIVING BREAD, is therefore one of the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion. The clear and strong statement of the doctrine, from the lips of the Saviour himself, is in figurative form, and is not to be understood in a literal sense. "I am the bread of life," or "the living bread." The language is taken from common life, and its meaning is obvious. What bread is to the body, Christ is to the soul.

1. First, then, *Bread is the support of life.* Natural life is made dependent on suitable food. Bread is not only palatable, and conducive to health, but it is indispensable to life itself. Cut off this supply, or destroy its nutritious property, and the animal system of man will quickly lose its vigor, and waste away and die. It is a mysterious appointment, that life shall be nourished and preserved by means of food. It had been just as easy for the Creator so to have made man as that no food would have been necessary to keep him alive. And then there had been no hunger, no starving, and no necessity for constant and severe toil in order to get the means of sustaining life. But the Divine economy makes bread *essential* to the support of life. If a man will not eat bread, or its equivalent, then he must die: there is no help for him. And God has adapted the whole animal system to this arrangement. Bread is natural to the body in its normal state. It craves it, relishes it, and is nourished by it. It is received into the system, distributed, appropriated, and converted into the component parts of the body itself, by means of various appropriate organs; and so is made to repair the constant waste which is going on and renew and strengthen man's animal system.

Nothing but *bread* or its equivalent will answer—God's own provision. There are things often eaten and drunk which do not nourish life, only help to enfeeble or kill it. They are not natural to the normal state of the system. They may stimulate it for the time being, as do all alcoholic substances, but it is only to weaken and reduce it in the end. They may deaden the sense of hunger, or grati a vitiated taste. but they carry no *life* to the blood. The evil substance may in

time be thrown off by a vigorous effort of the system, but the body has been injured by the process. Take *alcohol* for instance. No part of the system will receive it. Every organ repels it. It is a deadly enemy. It excites the brain, but imparts no nutriment; it weakens the organs which it unduly excites, destroys the tone of the system, paralyzes the nerves, and produces death, if taken in large quantity.

Bread only—that which is adapted to the animal economy, and which contains the nutritive element—will support life. If you wish to live and keep the body in a healthy state, you must seek and eat the bread which God has ordained for this specific purpose.

So Christ is the support of the soul, the element of spiritual life. Feeding by faith on this living bread, we are kept alive and nourished as the sons of God. As natural bread satisfies the demands of the body, and sustains the natural life of man, so Christ satisfies the demands of his spiritual nature, and makes him to live forever. He himself asserts this doctrine, and repeats it, again and again: "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread he shall live forever." The soul needs this Bread, just as much as the body needs food. It demands it, by every law of its economy; and it will pine in want, and misery, and guilt forever, if the demand be refused. Christ is not an attraction, a comfort, a stimulus, a delicacy, a hope, merely, but a want, THE GREAT WANT of man, which nothing else can supply. There is no true life without him. All other food fails of this end. "This is the bread of heaven," and man must eat of it, even "the flesh of the Son of God," or die. There is no setting aside this law. God has ordained it and made it imperative.

Every man realizes more or less, his need of this divine Bread. He is conscious of the want which Christ is meant to supply. His soul, without Christ, is like the body without nutritious food. It is possible, by artificial stimulants, or by unnatural food, to force the organs of the body to perform their functions for a while. But this is not *life*—it is *death*—it is the vitality of the system wasting itself without any return. So it is possible to substitute something instead of *Christ*, the Christ of the gospels, and the epistles. It is possible to feed the

mind on creature good, in some of its thousand alluring forms, to stimulate it with artificial excitements, and make a show of life—maintain the appearance of spiritual prosperity—keep up the semblance of hope, the glow of affection, the round of duty, and outward virtue. But it is an artificial, unnatural life. There is no real life at the centre; it is only a galvanic process; the action of stimulants on a vitiated nature—error, fanaticism, denominational zeal, false experience—which are soon spent, and which leave the system in a worse state than they found it.

There is not an intelligent, thoughtful man in all the world, who has not realized, at times, his great need of Christ. His mental darkness, and poverty of spirit, and misery of soul, and moral ruin, have been a conscious reality to him. Sin has not utterly eradicated that spiritual appetite which God imparted to his soul in the beginning. As the body cries for bread, and refuses a stone instead, so the soul, out of the depths of its immortal nature, cries for the Bread of Heaven, and will not be satisfied with the world instead. It craves the bread of God, and this inward, and often intense craving, the pleasures of sin, and the good things of earth, cannot satisfy. You may feed your immortal nature with the choicest dainties of creature good. You may surfeit it with the world's riches, and honors, and excitements, and yet your spiritual appetite will not be satisfied. Your soul will not thrive, and enjoy life. Your inward being will weary of them, and pine for that which is better. Bread, the Bread of God, is what your soul wants. It demands it by all its constitutional provisions and wants, and it must have it or die. God alone can fill the void of the human heart. Not the world, not nature, not philosophy, not the creature in any form, but Christ with his love and grace. He alone can relieve our moral darkness, quicken hope, give beauty to the spirit, life to the affections, and nourish the soul to everlasting life.

There is a wise *adaptation* in the Bread of heaven to the wants and conditions of our spiritual nature. The natural man fails to discover this. To him Christ is as a root out of dry ground. He sees no beauty in him. He does not appreciate his love and mediation. He cannot understand how there

can be such efficacy in his blood. His mind is all dark and bewildered. And so the simplicity of the Gospel is "foolishness" to him, and its freedom and urgency become a stumbling-block. But nothing strikes a *converted* man more forcibly than this adaptation of Christ to his spiritual nature. He had never so seen it until now, and it fills him with wonder and praise. His wants, he finds, are all met in Christ, and satisfied. He finds the Gospel in harmony with the laws of his being in all its provisions, and demands. Reason and faith agree. The great schism in his soul is healed. A new and blessed experience has begun. Light, and love, and peace, dwell within. The law of God is no longer a restraint, but his delight. To do the will of God is his meat and drink. The love of God constraineth him to a life of obedience. He lives now because Christ lives in him.

It was to this end the Son of God became incarnate—took on him man's nature, and suffered in that nature. He came down from heaven embodied in Humanity, that he might give his "flesh for the life of the world." We are to "eat of his flesh and drink of his blood." And to this end, his body was broken, and his blood shed on Calvary. He is therefore available. He is also a merciful Saviour, and if he were not we might well despair. He is an almighty Saviour, and none other can help us. "His blood cleanseth from all sin," and no less an expiation could suffice for us. His salvation is free, and if it were otherwise we could not hope for it.

This Bread, while it gratifies a healthful appetite, and meets every demand of the mind, imparts Christ's own nature to the soul, and thus secures growth and healthy action to all the parts and powers of the spiritual man. Wonderful bread! The Israelites did eat manna in the desert. This was miraculous bread, "angels' food." And yet they died. That was not the bread of heaven. It was meant to typify the bread of life—Jesus Christ incarnated and crucified for the life of the world. It nourished the bodies of the Israelites for forty years in the desert; that was all it could do. It was itself a natural and decaying substance, and could not prolong life forever. But the bread of the Gospel is *living* bread, spiritual and eternal in its properties. It never decays, never loses its

life-imparting virtue. It assimilates our nature to itself. It imparts its own undying life. The soul that truly feeds on Christ shall live forever. How many faint and dying souls have fed on this bread, and been revived, and nourished to everlasting life! When the soul renounces the provisions of the flesh, and of self-righteousness; renounces the world as its chief good, and the stimulants of passion and sin, and just cleaves to Christ—feeds daily on Him by faith and prayer—how full of comfort and hope is the heart! How the man grows in moral strength and excellence!

2. *Bread to be of use must be eaten.* It is not enough to feel our want of it and to provide it. It must be actually *eaten*—taken into the stomach and appropriated, by means of those organs which God has furnished for this purpose—or it will be of no more use than the dust of the street. If a famishing man cannot get food and eat it, he will die. He must will to eat; he must take bread into his mouth, and use the appointed organs to prepare it to give nourishment, or he will starve amidst stores of plenty, and in spite of God's bountiful provisions. He cannot leave nature to itself. He is not to fold his arms in indolence and refuse to use the means of life. Bread is provided for him by God's bounty; bread will nourish and keep him alive; but only on the condition that he avail himself of the provision, and be at the pains of seeking and appropriating the bread. If he neglect to do this; or if he violate nature's laws in what or how he eats, he will have to suffer. God's arrangement for the support of natural life requires exertion on the part of every man, the exercise of judgment and forethought, and the due observance of the laws of health.

And this analogy holds good in spiritual things. In vain has God provided bread for the soul, and brought it down from heaven, and fitted it to man's condition and nature, and freely offered it. And in vain do the word and Spirit teach man his perishing state, and urge salvation upon him, if he will not use his own powers in seeking and eating the Bread which God has set before him; if he will not come to Christ, as his life, and feed on him, and accept and appropriate the benefits of his death. The bread of heaven is of no avail, while

locked up in the Gospel, or cast forth into the world. It does a man no good while he simply admires the provision, and confesses to his need of it, and wishes he might take it. It is only when the needy soul really comes to Christ, and receives him by faith, and eats of his flesh, and drinks of his blood, that he feels the power of his life. When he is at the pains to seek a correct and thorough knowledge of Christ, and opens his mind and heart to the reception of his doctrines, and leans wholly on him for salvation, and uses all his powers in loving and serving him—then, and not until then, will Christ become his life.

But how many perishing souls fail to do this! They hear of Christ, and read of Christ, and feel a need of Christ, and in their hearts believe he is the bread of life, and at times wish they might feed on him and live forever. But there they stop. They never arise and seek their Father's house, as did the prodigal. They never come to God's table, and penitently take the bread of heaven, and eat it with faith in its sovereign efficacy. They receive Christ into their understanding, and convictions, but not into their affections, and sympathies. They do not heartily and entirely renounce the world, the flesh, and the Devil, and take Christ as all in all. Sad is the thought, that to multitudes of dying sinners, Christ is an *unappropriated* Saviour. They need him, and possibly desire him; and he is able and anxious to save them. He waits, in the closet, and in the sanctuary, to bless them with his love. They read or hear his messages, and admire the provisions of his grace. But they never call upon him: they never cast the soul in its guilt and ruin upon his promises. They perish in sight of their Father's house; perish with the bread of life in their hands, it may be in their very mouths.

3. *Bread must not only be eaten, but eaten daily.* It is not enough to satisfy the appetite *once*, it must be *repeated* day by day, all through life. The system can only appropriate a present supply. To-morrow the same want will exist, and it must be met in the same way. The "manna" was supplied to the Israelites *daily*, and daily (except on the Sabbath) they were to gather it. And Christ taught his disciples to pray,

"Give us *day by day* our daily bread." The supply of to-day will not do for to-morrow. It is a remarkable arrangement which thus makes us *daily* dependent upon divine Providence for the means of life. If we violate this law, by eating more than nature needs, or by going without, we incur the penalty. The same arrangement God has made in spiritual things. The soul needs daily food, just as really as the body. The want is a constitutional want, not an artificial one. Fresh and frequent supplies from Heaven is the condition of spiritual health and growth. The bread you feed on to-day, will not answer for to-morrow's necessities. You cannot receive a week's supply to-day. DAY BY DAY, is the law of Christ. Many violate this law. They seek to make the Sabbath answer for the whole week. They crowd all their religion into the Sabbath. They are so busy on other days; the world is so absorbing and so pressing in its demands, that, really, they have no time or heart for God's service. And so they aim to make it up on the Sabbath. They crowd down the food of seven days in one. They strive to gather at once enough of the heavenly manna to last until the Sabbath comes round again. They do up the main part of their repenting, and praying, and striving, and serving God, for the week on one day of it. I do not exaggerate. The Sabbath is fast becoming a day of religious *surfeiting*. It is made a day of excessive weariness and toil, by crowding into it so much of the week's religious duties, and activities. And the end of the Sabbath is thereby in a great measure defeated.

So also many start in their religious life with the notion that their first supply of knowledge, and zeal, and spirit of prayer, and faith, will hold out until the end. They do not know that "day by day" they must continue to seek and feed on Christ as in the beginning. "Day by day" they must nourish their repentance, and faith, and love at the cross. "Day by day" they must strive against the world, and the flesh, and the Devil. "Day by day" they must replenish their spiritual stores, by waiting upon God in the way of duty. And the result is, after a season of activity, there comes a time of declension—a falling away from first love and works. Not seeking their daily portion of the living bread, they grow faint

and feeble; their graces decay, and they are ready to die. The law of Christ is—and let us remember it as oft as we feed the body—"day by day."

This daily feeding on Christ is a great truth. Would to God that his people understood it! There would not then be so many weak ones, and so many sickly. The piety of the church would be more vigorous and lively. We feed on Christ in some happy hour, in some sweet meditation, in some blessed experience, under some sore affliction, or comforting promise; and we think to go a long while in the strength of it, forgetting that God no more sustains the life of the soul miraculously than he does the life of the body.

4. There is, confessedly, *a great mystery in the way in which life is supported.* Bread is the means, but who will explain to us the connection between the means and the end, or show us the process by which the end is reached: *how* bread supports life? We have the fact—give us the philosophy: explain it to our comprehension. The anatomist will explain the structure of every part of this wonderful mechanism, and the precise function of each member, and organ, and the minutest arrangement of the whole system; and he will take apart, and put together again, the whole bodily frame. And the chemist will tell what changes the bread undergoes, after eating it, and how its component particles are distributed, assimilated, and absorbed into the system. And this science is very curious and instructive; but after all it does not touch the vital question. We are still ignorant of the *connection* which a piece of bread has to the principle of life; and no philosophy can enlighten us; the fact is all we can know.—So is the relation of the bread of heaven to spiritual life a mystery, a profound mystery. The language of Christ is above our reason; it baffles human philosophy: "Verily, verily I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." We are required to believe the fact on the testimony of God. Eternal life is the effect of appropriating Jesus Christ. They live forever who eat of the bread of God. The flesh and blood of incarnate Deity pos-

sess the sovereign efficacy, when received by faith, of imparting and sustaining the life of God, or the principle of immortal virtue in the soul of man. It is a wonderful truth. We marvel not that the Jews caviled when Jesus announced it. It needs a high order of faith to be able to receive it. There is a connection, unexplainable but vital between the body and blood of Christ and the infinite blessing of eternal life. This is why the Son of God became man; why his body was broken on the cross, and his blood shed. This was a necessary condition of its life-giving virtue. The incarnation and the crucifixion are faith's sole groundwork. Our Saviour came down from heaven into this sinful world; appeared in human flesh; taught the way of life, and gave his flesh unto death. And having thus laid open the way of life, he offers *Himself* in the Gospel—his flesh and blood; his truth and spirit—as the life of his people. And all who have faith to discern the Lord's body, and faith in its efficacy, and who do truly feed on this bread of heaven, "shall never hunger"—"shall live forever."

We see clearly in the light of this discussion why so many sinners die in their sins, even with salvation within their reach. It is not that they are sinners above all sinners. It is not that there is a deficiency of bread. It is not that they are excluded from its provisions by a fatal decree. But it is because they do not seek and eat the bread of God. It is because they look to man, and not to Christ, to save them. It is because they do not so realize their sin and ruin, and have such faith in the efficacy of Christ's death, as to renounce all other ways and means and cleave to him. Christ is the only living bread, and failing to feed on *Him*—failing to draw their life from Him—they must die—there is no power that can save them. There is no virtue in their own goodness—no life in their philosophy—none in all this world.

We discover here also the secret of the feeble and sickly life of the church. There is not enough simple feeding on Christ. "The bread of heaven" is not made our daily food. The very "flesh and blood" of Jesus do not constitute our life. "The weak and beggarly elements of the world" are not wholly renounced. Our supplies are not always fresh and

abundant. Christ is not supreme, our all, our daily bread, life's one constant support. We lose sight of the divine simplicity of the Gospel. We mix philosophy with faith—the condiments of the flesh with the bread of God—the service of self with the service of Christ. It is the living bread only which nourishes the soul and keeps life agoing. And how little does the Church nowadays feed upon this. O how little of a personal living Christ is there even in the religious literature which floods the family, the Sabbath-school, and all the avenues of Christian thought and life! How little of a living Christ is there in the newspapers and monthlies which crowd out the Bible, and furnish a large part of the reading and thinking of the Church, even on the Sabbath! There is not enough of Christ, in his vital life, in the major part of the religious reading of the day to keep the soul from famishing. We have ingenious speculation, and philosophical thought, and scientific discussion, and fine sentiment, and sensation novelties in abundance. And Christians read, and admire, and wonder. And all the while grace decays, and life languishes, because they have been given "a stone ' for "bread;" the beauties of literature, the wonders of science, or the metaphysics of the schools, for "the flesh and blood" of Jesus Christ.

And it cannot be denied that even the pulpit—the evangelical pulpit—is doing much to foster and increase this very evil. Christ and his Cross is no longer its *one* great theme. It fails often to set forth the Gospel in its divine simplicity and fullness. The people are not always "fed" with the pure living bread of heaven. How many of its utterances are void of the inspiration of the Bible and the Cross! The most popular type of preaching in the present time is wanting in those elements which nourish a pure, vigorous, and living Christian life. The people are gratified, excited, entertained, surfeited often. But they are not "fed"—fed on the simple and substantial and living bread of the Word. And hence our leanness. Hence the feeble flow of the life-currents of Christianity. Hence the lack of health and vital action throughout the Church.

SECTION VI.

CHRIST THE BELIEVER'S HOPE OF GLORY.

THE Scriptures have a good deal to say on the subject of Hope. They allude to it so frequently, and lay so much emphasis upon it as to indicate that the office of Hope in the economy of Redemption is an important one. They always associate a "good" Hope with Christ: a "false" Hope rests on some other foundation, or has some other good as its object. A good Hope is a hope built upon Christ, draws all its life from Christ, and Christ is the end and substance of it. It is a gift of the Holy Ghost: it is classed with the evidences of adoption: it is a power in the sanctified heart: it aspires to all that is bright, and good, and glorious in the life beyond, and presses on to attain it. The Scriptures are careful to discriminate between a good and a false hope, implying that a mistake on this point might prove fatal. Without any equivocation or circumlocution, they declare that the wicked, the unregenerated, the unbelieving man, no matter what his expectations, has "no hope." With graphic language they portray the misery of a life destitute of hope, the terror of dying without the solace and support of hope, and the gloom and despair of the future world, from which the light of hope is to be forever excluded. They run a broad line of distinction between the hope of the man of God, resting on Christ, and the hope of the worldling, trusting in some form of creature good. The one having for its object an eternal state of holiness and blessedness, while the other seeks only that which is transient and unsatisfying. The one has for its foundation God's promises, which cannot fail; the other is built upon the sand, and is at the mercy of the elements, and as unstable as water. The one is a "lively" hope, and "purifying" in its effects; while the hope of the other yields no substantial fruit, and serves no other purpose than to lull a guilty conscience to rest. The Scriptures pledge the word, nay the "oath" of the unchanging God, that the Hope which the Holy Spirit plants in the Christian's soul, and which he is enjoined to cherish and trust in, shall be confirmed in eternity and fully realized, while "the hope of the ungodly shall perish." They attach so much importance to Hope, as

the moving spring to action, the pole-star of faith, as to declare that we are saved by hope. "For we are saved by hope. But hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." Rom. 8: 24, 25.

1. This definition of Hope lays bare its true nature. It relates to future good—good unseen, and unpossessed now, but promised and made sure in the Christian covenant. It is not a blessing in hand, but a blessing in store. Hence the same apostle elsewhere calls it "a hope laid up for you in heaven." And again: "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour, Jesus Christ." Hope then is of the nature of expectation. It has its eye intently and constantly fixed on a bright future that is coming. It has not only faith in such a future, but an assured conviction that he, the believer in the promises, shall finally "inherit" them. Paul, in writing to the Colossians, grasps the idea, in his own characteristic strength and fullness, and gives expression to it in these wonderful words, which epitomize the whole of Christian experience, as well as the substance of Christian doctrine: "CHRIST IN YOU THE HOPE OF GLORY." Col. 1: 27. What a sentence! What a sublime and yet practical truth! "*Christ*," the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, the substance and end of all things. "Christ *in you*," vitally united to and dwelling in his people—"the *hope*," the groundwork for eternity, the substance of desire, the burden of expectation. "Christ in you the hope of *glory*," final salvation, eternal blessedness in the kingdom of heaven. CHRIST—IN YOU—THE HOPE OF GLORY.—CHRIST—GLORY. An indwelling Saviour, and this blessed expectation. Calvary the foundation, and heaven the apex. Faith, taking hold of the Lamb of God and overcoming, and from the heights of celestial glory shouting the victor's song: "Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Paul's idea of Christian Hope, then, is, that it is the firm and confident expectation of eternal salvation and blessedness in heaven. It looks beyond this present evil world, which is to pass away—beyond the ills and conflicts of the flesh—beyond

the shifting scenes of time, the ravages of death, and the domain of the grave—and sees heaven in the distance—a heaven of sinless perfection, of eternal righteousness and peace, and of infinite and unfading splendor. And there it casts out an anchor and waits for the storms of life to spend their fury, the ravages of time to complete their work, and the grace of God to finish what it has begun, according to the promises, exceeding great and many, which God has spoken to man. Whatever appearances the present may wear to the outward eye, to Christian Hope the future is bright with promise, glorious with expectation. It lives in the future. Hope soars on a lofty wing, and sweeping upward, far above this vale of tears, this state of conflict with sin and death, it discerns "the everlasting hills," where the pure and the blessed dwell in light and peace. Its eye takes in the glory which bathes the sweet fields of immortality; its ears catch the rapturous notes of the redeemed family before the throne. And there the weary, the tempest-tossed, the lonely pilgrim is soon to find his final rest, and wear his crown, and shout his victory.

What a hope for a poor, sinful, suffering, and, in himself, helpless mortal to cherish! Were it not for the positive promises of an unchanging, and almighty Saviour, we could not believe that a destiny like this were possible for a child of Adam. The change is so great, the glory is so wonderful. With all the promises of scripture, which are "all yea and amen in Christ Jesus," to warrant it, and embolden it, Faith still staggers under the weight of such a hope. Hope outruns Faith in the race. Hope soars to a height where Faith trembles to follow. Hope loves to bathe in the supernal light of the Sun of Righteousness. Hers are all the riches, all the glories, of eternity. The air of heaven is her native element. Her feet may press the highest pinnacle in that kingdom of divinest grandeur.

There is power in such a Hope to lift us up and assimilate us to the higher life above. There is power in it to make us dead to the minor interests, and passing attractions of this present life. There is power in it to sustain the soul in its mortal conflict with evil, to soothe afflicted hearts, and assuage the tide of grief. There is power in it to wean the heart from

all creature and inferior good, and open it to influences which come directly down out of heaven, and to fill it, by anticipation, with the joy and peace of the life immortal. In the full and serene light of such a hope, O how small and mean does the highest earthly good appear! How trifling, and momentary seem the trials and sufferings of the flesh!

There is joy too in such a Hope. Well may the great apostle call on his brethren in Christ to "rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

> "Why should the children of a King
> Go mourning all their days?"

In the language of David, the child of such a Hope may chide his fears, and cheer his desponding heart: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God." Ps. 42:11.

Let us consider carefully *the relations of this Hope to Christ.* "Christ in you the hope of glory." A moment's reflection will convince any reasonable man, that a Hope of such a character as I have sketched, a Hope rising to such a height of expectation and glory, must rest on a broad and stable foundation, and receive the quickening, and sustaining power of almighty grace. It is an amazing hope, for a sinful and fallen creature to entertain. There is nothing whatever in himself to warrant it. He has no sufficiency in himself to keep it alive, no not for a day. But for the abounding grace of God, signally and constantly vouchsafed to him, such a Hope were presumption in the extreme, and would certainly be overthrown in the hour of death, and at the last judgment. But the foundations of this Hope are ample and sure, being laid before the foundations of the world, and laid in the purpose and counsel of God, and cemented and made effective and everlasting, by the blood and ministry of the Son of God. Building upon that foundation, there is nothing to fear. All God's perfections are pledged to confirm and realize to its fullest extent of glory and blessedness every living Hope of redeemed man.

Christ himself is this Hope. His nature, his sacrifice on

the cross as an expiation, his grace and Spirit, all enter into it, and really constitute it. It could have never existed, but for him. This were a hopeless world, a world of absolute despair —as really so as hell itself—but for Christ. We are made "prisoners of hope" only through his interposition in our behalf. Mercy is shown us, and forgiveness extended, solely on the ground of his merits and services. His death opened to us the gates of life, which sin had closed forever against us. Availing ourselves of his propitiation, we are reconciled to God. Having "fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us in the gospel," we "have a strong consolation," and the promise of eternal life is confirmed by the oath of God. The Bible continually speaks of Christ as the believer's Hope. Says Paul, in his noble defense at Rome: "For the Hope of Israel, I am bound with this chain." In his epistle to Timothy, he affirms that "the Lord Jesus Christ is our hope." And again to the Colossian church, it is "Christ in you the hope of glory."

Let us analyze this subject somewhat, and get a true and discriminating conception of it. Observe then, first, that Christ is the *foundation* of this Hope. We are expressly told—and there is abundant occasion in these days to emphasize the fact —that "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. 3: 11. His death underlies the whole system of Redemption, both as a doctrine, and as a life. All the provisions, all the promises, all the invitations and offers of the gospel, are dependent upon Him, and receive all their warrant, and significance, and efficacy from Him. It is the blood of Christ, simply and alone, that cleanses away sin. Sin is never pardoned, was never pardoned, can never be pardoned, except on the ground of Christ's death, making expiation. A rebel against supreme authority, and infinite love, has no possible ground to stand upon, except he take refuge in Christ, and plead his atonement, penitently received. Out of Christ "God is a consuming fire." The infinite holiness of his nature cannot endure the presence of impurity. The sinner has nothing to shield him until he makes Christ his "covert." He cannot hide his nakedness, the ugliness of sin, no more than Adam and Eve could hide the shame and guilt of

their souls by sewing fig-leaves upon their bodies, until he is clothed upon with the all-perfect righteousness of Christ. He is "without hope, and without God in the world," except he lay hold on the Lord Jesus Christ. A rational hope of eternal life, independently of a real and "lively" faith in the Christ of the Holy Scriptures, is simply a moral impossibility. A religious "faith," or "creed"—I care not what name it bears, or who professes, or endorses, or preaches it—which discards this fundamental doctrine, or which fails clearly and distinctly to apprehend Christ, as the central truth and the substance of revealed religion, can give life to no such Hope as I have described. Any and every system of religious thought which takes away the chief corner-stone of Hope, viz., a Divine Saviour, a vicarious atonement, salvation through the justifying righteousness of the Lord's anointed—only tends to beget and foster fatal delusions. They never saved a soul, and never can, unless the perfections and law of God undergo an essential change. However plausible and trustworthy the superstructure may seem to the outward eye: however much their theory of religion may commend itself to human reason, and to the unregenerate heart, it has no more foundation than "the baseless fabric of a vision," and will dissolve and vanish in the hour of supreme need. The entire unregenerate multitude, though they may theoretically receive the Scriptures, have "no hope;" are building upon "the sand," where "the floods" of ruin are sure to meet them, and sweep them into perdition. Simply because their faith sustains no vital relations to Christ. They do not build up their Hope on his blood and grace. They have never renounced their own worthless righteousness for the righteousness of Christ; have never truly repented of sin and looked to God, through Christ, to be forgiven.

This matter of foundations is vital, fundamental. If Jesus Christ be really one's Hope; if he truly rest all his expectations on his blood, and Spirit—he is safe—safe even though there be serious errors and defects in other particulars. But if Christ be not our Hope: if our expectations regarding eternity rest on the mere mercy of God, or on morality, or on our repentance and good works—on anything whatsoever save "the

Christ of God"—we are doomed to disappointment. Our Hope is as frail "as a spider's web," and it will perish and whelm the soul in everlasting ruin.

But, building faith and obedience upon this good foundation, we shall abide in the day that shall test every man's hope; and not only abide, but receive the reward of the just. And such virtue is there in this Foundation; such a divine efficacy is there in the blood of Christ, shed for the remission of sins, that, even if we "build wood, hay and stubble," thereon, instead of "gold, silver and precious stones"—"the work, when tried by fire," "shall be burned"—"he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire." 1 Cor. 3: 12–15.

On a point so vital, and involving all the high interests of immortality, we shall be verily inexcusable and guilty, if we do not try our hope, and examine into its structure and effects with holy jealousy. In all kindness, and faithfulness, as one who must give account to God for this opportunity, may I ask the reader these pertinent questions, while I ask them of my own heart? Is Christ really your Hope for eternity? Do you truly receive and trust in Him, and in none other, for salvation? Have you confidence in nothing beside his grace, and blood, and Spirit? Does his death, penitently pondered, and his righteousness cordially embraced, underlie all your expectations, constitute your one plea, and refuge? Is it the prevailing feeling of your heart, that you are a self-ruined, helpless sinner, and if ever saved, must be saved by Jesus Christ, the atoning Lamb of God? Does your faith fasten on the crucified Jesus, as your helper, friend, refuge, deliverer, "the Lord your righteousness?" Have you consciously come to this "Rock of Ages," as the only foothold there is for man in this world of sin and death, crying as you came, in the language of dying earnestness, and trembling faith,

> "Thou must save, and Thou alone;
> In my hands no price I bring;
> Simply to thy cross I cling."

If your Hope has this foundation: if it strikes its roots deep down in Christ's atoning work: if it draws its life from an incarnate God, crucified for sin, and risen again for our justifi-

cation: if it loves to breathe the atmosphere of Gethsemane, and Calvary, and linger about Bethlehem, and the Mount of Olives, and the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea; and from Bethany delights to view the risen Lord as he was parted from the disciples, and a cloud received him out of their sight: if it loves to commune with Jesus now, in prayer, at his table, in holy fellowship with his people – then rest assured, your "Hope will not make you ashamed." You have a Hope which the world cannot give, and cannot take away; a Hope which even death cannot quench; a Hope that shall rise immortal out of the grave and inhabit a blessed eternity when this world shall have passed away.

Consider, secondly, that Christ Jesus is the life of this Hope, as well as its foundation. "Christ *in you* the hope of glory." Christ alone, isolated from your soul, is not sufficient. His death, in itself, is not sufficient, accomplished nothing, save to make salvation possible. His atonement has no efficacy, independently of the personal faith of the believer. Christianity is not a system of doctrine merely; it is also a divine life in the soul. Christ is a subjective Saviour, as really as an objective one. While revealed to the understanding, as an object of faith, a matter for intellectual comprehension and acceptance, He is likewise revealed to the inner consciousness, to the spiritual man, in his divine essence, in the spirit and power of his character, and must be believed on "with the *heart* unto righteousness," in order to bring the soul under the power of his quickening grace, to beget in it, by the new creating energy of his Spirit, a "lively hope." The work of Christ in and upon the believer, is as necessary, as essential, as his work of dying. Indeed, his mediatorship, his kingly and priestly office, his incarnation and death, his resurrection, and ascension to the right hand of God, are only preparatory to the real grand achievements of his grace. These achievements are all of a moral character. Hearts of enmity slain – dead souls quickened into life—moral defilement cleansed away – offended God and offending man reconciled and brought into harmony—the curse of sin lifted, and its dominion over man broken, and the power of Satan, and the power of this evil

world, restrained and kept under—and sinful man, sunk into the very abyss of ruin, helped to rise into the very image of God, and restored to sonship,—*this* is the achievement of Christ, and it is the grandest, the most difficult, the most stupendous achievement that even Omnipotence ever accomplished. No man has any reason to hope simply because Christ has died for him, and a salvation has been wrought out, and God offers to be reconciled. That part of Redemption relates only to God, to moral government, to the outward obstacles to salvation, and to the means necessary to prepare the Holy Spirit to apply the remedy provided, and bring men under the saving power of it. He must sustain a more vital relation to Christ than this; he must be brought into an intimate spiritual personal union with him: he must so appropriate Christ to his individual faith, and wants, and so bring his whole nature into subjection to and sympathy with him as to "receive of his life," or he has no part in him. Christ's own words on this point are remarkable: "I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned." John, 15: 5, 6. This union to Christ, and dwelling in him, is a glorious doctrine, rightly understood, and vigorously grasped by faith. The life the believer lives, he lives "by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us and gave himself for our sins." It is not he that lives, but Christ who lives in him. Christ is his very *life*. Not only the ground-work of his Hope, but the Hope itself. Not only the author of his salvation, but the salvation itself. Not only the theory of religion, but the actual substance. Not only the form, the doctrine, but the vital spirit, the animating principle, the accomplished life. "Thou shalt call his name Jesus," says the angel to Mary, "for he shall save his people from their sins."

Christ becomes the Hope of his people by atoning for their sins, and reconciling them to God: by spiritually illuminating their minds and hearts through the agency of his Word and Spirit: by working in them repentance unto life, and ac-

tual holiness: by taking them into close union with himself, so that they become "partakers of the divine nature." Their life is grafted on to his. By his obedience unto death they are justified; by his grace they are changed into his image; by his power they are kept through faith unto salvation.

The Hope of heaven has no life and no vitality whatever, aside from the Christ of the gospels and of the epistles. There is no such thing experienced in the soul of any man as a spiritual quickening, a resurrection to life everlasting, no matter what his condition, his education, his belief, his outward life, until he is brought into vital relations to the crucified and reigning Saviour. The most orthodox faith in Christendom; the best possible ritual; the strictest and most conscientious attention to all the externals of religion, are powerless, except as they are vitalized and made effective by the superadded power and Spirit of an indwelling Saviour. Hope must not only ground itself on the merits of the atoning Jesus, but it must continually take hold of a living, sin-conquering Redeemer, and by his help rise to God and holiness. It must not only strike its roots deep down in the soil of the incarnate, suffering Messiah, but it must draw its daily nourishment, and its elements of growth from intimate and habitual communion with him in the Word, in the ordinances of his house, and in prayer and meditation. Hope will be *genuine* just in proportion as Christ is its foundation and its life. Hope will be *liv ly* just in proportion as the soul takes hold on Christ and maintains true fellowship with him. Hope will be a *purifying* power just in proportion as we are personally brought into actual sympathy with the Sinless One and made conscious of his indwelling life. It will prove a *joyful* Hope just in proportion as we come under a moral crucifixion, and aspire to the infinite riches of Christ's love, and rise to the heights of redeeming grace, and yield our whole being up to Him who is the Resurrection and the Life of the world.

"Christ in you the Hope of Glory!" Can such a Hope ever die? Can such a Hope ever disappoint? Can such a Hope leave any good unattained, in this life or the next? "Christ in you" is Divine grace reigning in your heart unto salvation. "Christ in you" is the fullness of God's blessing

made over to you in the covenant of redemption. "Christ in you" is heaven already begun in the soul, eternal life in actual possession. For Christ is "the power of God unto salvation." Christ is "the heir of all things." Christ is the Light, the Glory, of "heavenly places." Christ is "eternal Life:" "For this is life eternal, that ye may know Him, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent."

Glance a moment, in conclusion, at the *substance* or *end* of this blessed Hope. It is "*Glory.*" This is repeatedly asserted in the inspired Word. The effects or fruits of Christ's redeeming work are all expressed in this one word. Passing by all minor blessings and inferior ends, the spirit of inspiration, by a single flight, rises to this sublime elevation, where the mind may take in at a single sweep the whole scope of Redemption, and revel in the infinite grandeur of its consummation. No other word in the compass of human language is so fitting to be associated with the completed work of the world's Redeemer, to express the results of that work, or to describe the future state of his people. "GLORY!" Partakers of His Glory in the heavenly kingdom, even as he is a partaker of his Father's glory.

It is not the hope of *pardon* merely. It embraces this, as the greater includes the less; but it embraces a great deal more. It is true of all who have made Christ their Hope, that their iniquities are forgiven, and they are no longer in a state of condemnation. But the grace of God stops not here. It is not satisfied to release the imprisoned soul from the house of bondage. It restores the prodigal to his former state. It converts the slave, the criminal, into a freeman, a son, and confers on him the liberty, the birthright, of the sons of God.

It is not the Hope of *perseverance* only. It embraces this. For when a man has "Christ in him," there is no such thing as coming short: failure is not in the vocabulary of the new life. The grace which lays the foundation of genuine Christian Hope in the soul will not cease to plan and to work until the topmost stone shall be laid with rejoicing. Christ *c mpletes* whatsoever he undertakes. His grace never fails. His promises stand sure. His blood prevails against any

amount of guilt. His power "saves unto the uttermost." His grace is sufficient for "the chief of sinners." The fears, and the desponding mood of the Christian are groundless. The work is Christ's. He committed himself to it before the foundation of the world was laid. He has been carrying it triumphantly forward these sixty centuries. Already millions upon millions of our apostate race have been raised up by Him into companionship with angels in glory. He who "spared not his own Son," will withhold nothing that is needed to complete this, his greatest work, and the work on which he has set his heart. The love and grace which endured and triumphed in Bethlehem, in Nazareth, in the wilderness, in Gethsemane, and on Calvary, is not to be quenched, or turned aside now—by any evil he sees in us, or by any resistance he encounters from wicked men and devils. None shall be able to pluck his own sheep out of his fold. "Perseverance unto the end," is therefore assured by this Hope. But even *more* than this is expressed. Christian Hope rises higher still. Grateful for the evidences and the comforts of pardon, and assured of final victory over all enemies, and sustaining grace in the throes of death and the terrors of the judgment day, it looks up with a steady and far-reaching vision to those serene heights where the enthroned Lamb reigns in glory, and, confident of all needed help, plumes its wings for a flight to the empyrean sphere.

It is nothing less than the Hope of Glory. And this glory is as wonderful in extent and grandeur as it is in substance. It is the glory of Christ, who is "the brightness of the Father's glory"—the glory of the eternal Godhead, the glory of Mediatorial sovereignty, the glory of the Cross, which is the real centre and substance of the universe. There is no glory in nature; there is no glory in anything throughout God's universal kingdom comparable with this. It is the Glory of Christ, forever shining in its beauty and strength, that makes Heaven so attractive a place, and that will awake the alleluias of saints and angels for ever and ever. It will be happiness enough, and honor enough, for any creature, be he man or angel, or archangel, cherubim, or seraphim, to be with Christ, to be like Christ, to partake of Christ's glory. And to this

Christian Hope aspires. The promises reach even to this amazing height. Take a single one of them, and see if you can measure it, or limit it. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Col. 3: 4. He will raise his people up in the last day, and glorify them with himself in the presence of the Father and all his holy angels. As He dwells in them here, so shall his glory be manifest in them there. As they fellowshiped his sufferings and death on earth, so shall they participate in the glory and blessedness of his future exaltation. One with Him here, they shall be one with Him there. At His glorious appearing they shall put on salvation as a garment, and shine above the brightness of the sun in the firmament forever.

What a future looms up before the Christian believer! Blessed, thrice blessed, are they—be they rich or poor, learned or illiterate, honored or obscure among men—all, of every nation, and clime, and tongue, and age of the world, of whom it can be truly said, "Christ in you the Hope of Glory."

SECTION VII.

THE LONELINESS OF JESUS IN THE FLESH.

Reader, did you ever meditate on the *lonely* life which Jesus lived while in the flesh? In all the world there was not one being who understood or comprehended him: not one with whom he could freely interchange thoughts and experiences, or to whom he could look for sympathy and succor in the hour of weakness and trial. No: He was absolutely *alone* in his entire humanity: in his boyhood and manhood, in his home life and his public life, in all his social intercourse, and in his entire mission from the cradle to the sepulchre. With strictest truth could he say of himself, what in no sense is true of any other man: "I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with me." Isa. 63: 3.

In assuming our nature, He assumed all its conditions—

physical and mental, social and moral, sin excepted. He was man, in the truest and fullest sense of the term. And the very perfectness of his nature made all the human elements which entered into his being of the rarest and most exquisite type. Sin never for a moment clouded his mental vision, or vitiated his tastes, or deadened his sensibilities, or impaired a law of his being. No man, therefore, ever had such an innate love of the true and the beautiful in nature, in art, in social life, in character, and in the realm of the spiritual, as Jesus had. Consequently no one ever felt so keenly and painfully the absence of it in all the life and being he came in contact with. What was there in man, whom sin had despoiled and ruined, or in the world, blighted, corrupted, and dying, to please or delight the Son of Man!

If an angel from heaven were to come down into this world and put his being and life in intimate contact with its depravities and woes, and experience its varied evils, as Jesus did, what a shock he would feel! What a new and chilling atmosphere breathe! Where would he find his social and spiritual affinities? In what circle, among what people, in what religious body would he find congeniality, divine and holy fellowship? To whom could he look, on whom lean for strength or succor, in temptation or peril or sorrow? This was literally true of Jesus. With what pity and grief did he survey the universal wreck and desolation around him, not merely of the animal and physical world, but of rational and immortal beings made in the image of God; of lives, with Heaven's wealth lavished upon them, worse than wasted, and souls forever lost! Upon his own shoulders he bound the heavy load of human guilt and woe, and asking and receiving help from no earthly source, he wrought out the stupendous work of our redemption, in the face of obloquy and opposition and difficulty sufficient to appall the stoutest heart, and challenging the resources of the Godhead to defeat and overcome. Had Jesus, in all his earthly experience, so much as one true and faithful friend? Among all his disciples was there a solitary instance of unselfish, unfaltering devotion? one who truly understood his character and mission, or who appreciated his doctrine and life? What sect in religion, what school in phi-

losophy, accepted his teaching, or reverenced his authority? What nation, what city, what village, bade him welcome and sought to cheer and aid him in his self-denying and mighty undertaking to regenerate and save this corrupt and lost world? "He came unto his own," and how was he "received?" "He spake as never man spake"—so divine his wisdom, so lofty his morality, so tender and life-giving his words—but who of all the multitude who listened, believed on him? He lived as never man lived, before or since; but was ever man so maligned, so hated, so persecuted, even unto death? He wrought innumerable miracles of power and grace, but did they make him friends, or silence his enemies, or save his life, or establish his doctrines in the world? Such divine teachings, such lessons of love and forgiveness and holy living, never before came from human lips; but did any of the doctors of the law revere and believe on him? Had he a following among the noble and the great, the cultivated, the literati? Was there ever lived such a life of self-denying toil, and unrequited and heavenly beneficence for the good of others? Yet whose purse was at his command? Whose house was open to him? Who rose up to welcome and minister to him in his frequent and weary journeys? Were not his own touching words true of him to the last—"The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." So poor was he in this world's goods, that when he would pay tribute to Cæsar, the fish out of the sea had to supply the money, and charity finally afford him a burial!

The nearest approach to a grateful recognition of his worth was when "the multitude spread their garments in the way and shouted Hosanna to the Son of David," on his final entrance into Jerusalem. But who of all that "great multitude" stood by him in the awful scenes of humiliation and suffering which quickly followed? Knowing what was immediately before him—the fickleness and insincerity of that shouting throng, his betrayal and scourging and mock crowning and crucifixion—must not the loud acclaim of this motley crowd have seemed like mockery to the Son of Man? May we not believe that in all his public ministry there was not

an hour, not an occasion, when he felt more keenly and bitterly his isolation, his absolute solitariness of spirit, than in the very hour when triumphal shouts rang in his ear on the eve of his final sufferings?

The record we have of his personal life, although brief, and fragmentary, and singularly imperfect, is yet sufficient to show us that he yearned for companionship, for social and spiritual communion, like other men; that his soul dwelt "alone" in the midst of society only from the necessities of the case; that his feelings were often lacerated by the unfaithfulness and treachery of his friends, and by the insults, slanders, and persecutions of his enemies. His affection for and intercourse with the little family at Bethany, and with "that other disciple whom Jesus loved," are highly suggestive, and yet too delicate and sacred to dwell upon. Who of us, as we study that Divine person and life, would not, as we now think, have counted it an unspeakable privilege to minister to the Son of God in the days of his flesh? to have invited him to our home and supplied his personal wants, and shared in his daily joys and sorrows, and received his teachings with docile and grateful hearts, and clung to him with undying love and unfaltering fidelity even to the last? And yet was there one of all his disciples who did this? one upon whom he could lean and did lean in the great crises of his life and mission? No! not even the *mother* who bore and nursed him knew her Son, understood his real inner life. In the incidents brought out in the narrative of his visit to Jerusalem with his parents when he was twelve years of age, there is much interesting light thrown on this subject. He was left to himself. Alone he disputed with the doctors in the temple. His parents journeyed a "whole day" homeward without missing him. And how expressive this child's response to his mother's chiding question, "How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" We cannot conceive of any home intimacy with such a lad; of any associates in such a boyhood; of any companionship in manhood during all the years he plied his humble craft in Bethlehem. A fitting prelude to his public life and after-experience.

For at what period, at what crisis of his mission, did he

find in all that humanity into which He incarnated himself, a single friend at hand to counsel with and aid him? When "led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil," he was solitary and alone. Far away from man and all human succor, he withstood the fiercest and most persistent assaults of satanic power that earth or hell ever witnessed. "Angels," we read, "came and ministered unto him" after the tremendous conflict; but no man came nigh to him, or even looked on from afar. So in Gethsemane, when his soul was "exceeding sorrowful unto death," and his "sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground," when there rang out on the midnight hour a wail of mingled agony and supplication—"O my Father, if this cup may not pass from me except I drink it, Thy will be done," he was still *alone*. As if shrinking from such suffering, with no creature to keep him company, he had selected and taken "Peter and the two sons of Zebedee" with him into the garden. And what pathetic entreaty is there in his words—"Tarry ye here and watch with me." But the sight of his "exceeding sorrow," and the sad tones of his voice in that awful hour, did not suffice to keep so much as one of these chosen disciples awake. For each time he returned to them, he found them "asleep." "What! could ye not watch with me one hour?" Even in that supreme hour of darkness and travail, when the burden of a world's guilt oppressed his soul and prostrated him on the cold earth, he had not a single disciple to keep him company—no, not for "one hour." As on all former occasions, so now—he wept and prayed and sorrowed *alone*, through the long hours of that memorable night.

And finally, when his sufferings culminated on Calvary, how many weeping eyes and broken hearts, think you, did he look down upon from the cross? There he hung for hours in mortal agony, "crucified between two thieves," pierced with nails and spear, bleeding, forsaken, and not a voice plead for him, not one pitying word fell on his ear. Nature was in sympathy with him; for the rocks did rend at the sight, the sun hid his face, and the vail of the temple was rent in twain. But humanity did not weep or break its heart! To make his loneliness *complete* in that dreadful hour, even the Father with-

drew his wonted presence: "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"

Is it not literally true, therefore, that Jesus lived, and worked, and suffered, and died *alone?* He was indebted to no man. All his resources were in himself. His single arm vanquished the devil, atoned for sin, conquered death and the grave, and opened the door of life to lost man. Heaven watched over him at every step of his career, and angels were "ministering spirits" unto him, until they welcomed him back to glory with their glad hosannas. But the earth — it rejected, mocked and crucified him!

We may learn a useful lesson from the example and experience of Jesus. We long for recognition. We mourn that we are not appreciated. Our daily complaint is that we are not understood even by our most intimate friends. We plead for the warmth and sunshine of sympathy and congeniality as the condition of hope and comfort and success. We are afraid to stand alone, to attempt anything single-handed, to lean upon simple faith in God's promises, and go forth into the thickest of the battle. We have no heart unless we are in the midst of a multitude to inspire us, and witness and approve our achievements. We must have the sympathy of friends or the brethren; we must be sure of co-operation and approval, or we falter in resolution and turn back, or submit to ignominious defeat. Failing, as they think, to gain appreciative recognition of their talent, or influence, or usefulness, how many hearts are made habitually wretched! How many lives are wasted in vain regrets! How many golden opportunities are lost! Granted that nothing earthly is more grateful or strengthening than the fellowship of kindred souls—the confidence, countenance, and hearty sympathy of the brotherhood of the saints. But let us not forget that Jesus had no experience of this kind whatsoever, and yet He never faltered in duty, or repined at his lot. Let us never forget also that man's favor and help are not an *essential* condition, either of happiness or usefulness. The humblest, the obscurest, the least appreciated disciple need not despair, in view of the ex-

perience of Jesus. Apart from the world, by influences and agencies which have their source and life wholly in himself, and in God, he may conquer the world, vanquish Satan, subdue sin in himself, quicken and elevate the life around him, and cause joy among the angels of God.

Above all may those who serve Christ in the *ministry* draw hope and courage from this experience of the Master. If called of God, and in full sympathy with Jesus they cannot fail to drink of this cup. For this "world lyeth in the wicked one." It is at enmity with God. Its prevailing spirit, sentiments, habits and life, are irreligious. Much of the learning and civilization, the philosophy and "science falsely so called," of the age, is materialistic, atheistic, and godless. Everywhere is mammon worshiped. Sensuality in every form, and wickedness in high places, and among the masses, abound. Truth is fallen in the streets. Even the nominal Church is scarcely distinguishable from the world. Her "witness bearing" is feeble, and often false. From thousands of her pulpits "the trumpet gives forth an uncertain sound." And never did the tide of worldliness so swell, and surge, and threaten to submerge the one hope of the race.

In the midst of such a world, such a life, such an array of hostile forces, we are called to stand, to testify, to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," to push the battle even unto victory, or die in the conflict; to uphold the evangelical creed, and the spiritual life of the Church, "a life hid with Christ in God." In the nature of things the minister who faithfully represents the Cross, and Heaven, and Eternity, in such circumstances, will often find himself *alone*, without sympathy or succor in the life around him—opposed, maligned, fighting single-handed against human wickedness and satanic wiles without, and formalism and deadness within the Church.

But this should not daunt us. For when we are weak man-ward, then we are strong God-ward and in the power of His might. Never do we take a death grip on "the powers of the world to come," until sense and sight utterly fail us. Never do we deeply fellowship the Cross until we die to the flesh. Never do we truly realize our individual responsibility

to God for the tremendous trust given into our hands by the ascended Lord, until we are shut out from all creature reliances and expectations, and shut up to simple faith in the arm of an unseen Power. The grandest events recorded in human history, the great ideas and inventions that have revolutionized human thought and life, were born, and wrought into form and living power in the solitariness of individual musing and struggling. In the closet, in the study, in personal communion with God and the spiritual world—away from man, apart from society, independently of favor or suggestion or sympathy from any earthly source—are achieved the great moral and spiritual victories which bless the Church and the world, and fill Heaven with alleluias.

CHAPTER XV.

THE END OF THE MEDIATORIAL SYSTEM.

The immediate end of Redemption, it is admitted, is the salvation of all who should believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3: 16. The great mission of Christ to earth was "to seek and to save the lost." The gospel is a system of agencies to make this fact known to the world, and to prevail on men not to "neglect so great salvation." God's infinite wisdom and goodness are conspicuous in planning such a scheme; and the worth and efficacy of Christ's sacrifice are shown in its practical results. A world of misery and suffering has thereby been prevented, and an immense accession of good to the universe secured. The End is worthy of the Eternal Mind, and justifies the expenditure lavished in order to achieve it.

But this is far from being the chief or ultimate end of Redemption. Its scope is wider and grander than this. The circuit of its influence extends to other worlds. God's purpose respecting it is an "eternal" purpose, formed before the world and man had being, and reaches on in the sweep of its majestic and gracious power beyond the judgment of the great day. In its principles, arrangements, and applications, it embraces all creatures, in "all the places of his dominion," in all "heavenly places;" that is the whole universe, with all its intelligences, and orders, and dignities. It relates primarily to God's moral government; to his moral government not only over man, but over angels, and over all creatures amenable to law. It is a measure which has special relations to his everlasting

kingdom, which is to be one of "righteousness and peace." The worth and glory of Christ's mediation, and atoning sacrifice, and stupendous ministry as Lawgiver and Saviour, will not fully appear, and cannot be duly appreciated, until the infinite plan shall have fully unfolded in the far-distant ages of a blessed eternity.

The great apostle to the Gentiles had a true conception of the ultimate end of the Mediatorial System, and gives a magnificent outline view of it in his epistle to the Ephesians (3: 10, 11): "To the intent that now, unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." This remarkable passage—remarkable alike for the boldness of its conception, the breadth of its view, and its philosophical insight into God's true system of the universe—deserves careful and profound study.

He states the "intent," or end, which God had in mind, in this arrangement, showing premeditation, "counsel," design. It was not a chance thing, or accident, or a minor consideration. It was not left to the contingency of circumstances which might arise in the execution of the plan. But way back in the secret counsels of the Godhead, before man or angel existed, God, in determining or decreeing what should come to pass, ordained the Mediatorial System, out of which should come the Church of Christ, redeemed and purified by means of his incarnation and death for sin, and in which the power and glory of grace should be conspicuously and impressively illustrated—not in a way to impair the force of law, but rather to invest it with new sanctity and power. And the "intent," or practical end, of this moral display of the Divine perfections, is to reveal "unto principalities and powers in heavenly places," "the manifold wisdom of God." "Heavenly *places*," clearly means inhabited worlds, not vast solitudes, not tenantless systems: "Many mansions," as Christ expresses the thought; the abodes of the celestial intelligences. "The principalities and powers," here spoken of, indicate the various ranks, orders, dignities, powers and dominions, which tenant these "heavenly places." And the inspired apostle unequivocally affirms, that

the supreme "intent" or end of gathering the Church of Christ out of the moral ruins of this world relates to a more glorious and perfect revelation of God to all these worlds in his vast empire, and to all these orders of higher intelligences.

Even "the manifold wisdom of God" is to be declared to them, by this wondrous expedient of sovereign grace. "Manifold," in the sense of being distinct from nature, and providence—above nature, and superior to nature, and to the operations of the providential system. "Manifold wisdom," in the sense of a fuller, more essential and glorious display of the Divine perfections. Here was not Omnipotence, working wonders in infinite space, and ordaining natural laws to regulate matter; or wonders in the providential government of the universe. But there was an infinitely higher display, both of mind, and moral power and grandeur: a "wisdom" equal to the solving of one of the most stupendous problems of Divine government and human existence—viz., the problem of "Moral Evil"—how to meet it, and how to treat it, so as that the ravages of sin shall not be suffered to go on interminably: to circumscribe it, hedge it in, restrain it, and in a measure lessen it, and yet not so as to interfere with the free agency of the creature: how to overrule it so as to make it contribute to the ends of righteousness: and especially and above all things, how to be able to *forgive sin*—to extend pardon to rebellious subjects, and restore them to the Divine favor, and in due time elevate them to "heavenly places," and yet answer the end of law and justice, and preserve intact the moral government of God.

Here indeed was a tremendous problem to solve; and every creature, in earth, and in all "heavenly places," was profoundly interested in the question, Whether it could be solved, and. if solved, how, by what means, in what way?

But solved it was, or will be, in the history of human redemption, by means of a people personally rescued from under the fell power of sin, and the dominion of Satan, and renewed into the Divine likeness. And that by means of a grand expiatory sacrifice on the part of the Son of God, and that sacrifice made efficacious through the Holy Spirit. And the manner in which this great problem is solved; the means by which it is accomplished; the elements, agencies, and influences,

which constitute its chief factors, and the history of its achievements, running through six thousand years, and it may be twice or thrice that number before the plan is consummated—all serve to bring out the manifold wisdom of God in strong colors, and to challenge the admiration of all worlds and all intelligences, to whom the revelation is declared.

Such being God's "intent," or the end in view, in ordaining this vast scheme of moral revelation for the instruction and benefit of his universal kingdom, observe Paul's further statement: "According to the *eternal* purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." It was not an afterthought then—an expedient suggested by the inroad of moral evil—an experiment necessitated by the existing condition of things. On the contrary, it was in accordance with, and in fulfillment of, this "purpose," made from "eternity;" made before sin, or man, or angel was; made in foreknowledge of the entrance of sin into his kingdom, and with special reference to its "moral uses;" to the way sin was to be met, and treated, and finally disposed of, "to the glory of his grace," and to the stability and everlasting harmony and peace of his kingdom.

And this "eternal purpose" to achieve this wondrous work, for this high end, was "purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." The "one Mediator" was the foundation of the purpose. The atonement of the Son of God, in human nature, in this world of the Cross, was to be the warrant of it. The cooperation and blending of all the Divine moral perfections, in the accomplishment of it, was to constitute a fuller and more glorious revelation than was ever before made—a revelation *upward* into "heavenly places," and to the minds and hearts of angelic beings, from this lost and sinning world, in which the Cross is planted, and where almighty sovereign Grace is achieving such sublime conquests over sinful men, and over the combined powers of moral evil.

Is it any marvel that Paul, contemplating this sublime Purpose, in the light of this ultimate revelation—sublime in conception, sublime in the manner of its execution, sublime in the circuit of its influence, and sublime in its final results—should find language impotent to express his admiration and

wonder, and hence should exclaim, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" And this is the most that any of us can do. We cannot fathom such depths of "wisdom and knowledge." They are simply infinite. No mind, other than the mind of God, could have even so much as conceived the idea of placing a Mediator at the Head of the entire created system of being, embracing nature, providence and grace—a Mediator, representing in his own person and office, both the Creator and the creature, both supreme government and the welfare of each individual subject—and this Mediator to undertake, in a universe in which moral evil was to enter as a terribly disturbing, disorganizing, and destructive force, to "reconcile all things unto God"—to evolve out of such a state of things, a system of moral harmony among all intelligences, and of moral government in a kingdom of eternal righteousness and peace. And to do this by moral means and forces, chief among which is the death of the Mediator himself, "the eternal Son of God," as a solemn propitiation for sin, and an ample and accepted substitute for the transgressor; and the special agency of the Holy Spirit of God in the world, in order to give effect to that atonement, and make it efficacious in accomplishing the Divine purpose. I say, no man, or angel, could have even conceived the sublime *idea;* much less have thought it *possible* and *practical*, or discovered any way by which so stupendous an idea could ever be realized. Yet the mind of God, in the secret counsels of eternity, conceived and purposed the infinite Plan, and all the means and arrangements necessary to carry it out. And in the fullness of time he began to "declare" it, to unfold it; to give it form, and expression, and life: and for six thousand years our world has been the special theatre for its development. Here "the manifold wisdom of God" has been brought out in illustrious display. Here the Son of God has taken to himself a human nature, and taught mankind the principles and the lessons of this "kingdom of heaven," which he came to set up in their hearts. And, in due time, when his witness was complete, he offered up his life on the cross, to expiate sin and "bring in everlasting righteousness." Here the Holy Spirit has been poured out, in copious effusion, and souls numberless have been quickened from the

death of sin, and renewed unto holiness and life. And here, too, "the ministry of angels" has been established, both as a means of spiritual growth to them, and of great good to "them who are to be the heirs of salvation." So that, to-day, we are midway in the actual accomplishment of this infinite and eternal purpose.

The History of this Purpose, from its ideal conception in the thought of the eternal Father, down to its full consummation in the harmony and blessedness of "the whole family in heaven," is a history of such marvels of "manifold wisdom" and power, goodness and grace, as never before challenged the attention of angelic minds. The work has moved on from the beginning of things until the present time, without interruption. God has never, in all the grandeur of his being, and in all the extent of his dominion, lost sight of this one purpose, or been turned aside, or hindered, or disappointed, by any unforeseen, or untoward event. All was known to Him, and the cost counted, ere the first step was taken. Already has he made the one stupendous personal sacrifice involved in it. When "the hour" came, and the bleeding victim must be laid upon the altar, He, the Father, "spared not his well-beloved Son," but "freely gave him" unto death, even the death of the cross. And that sacrifice involved all minor sacrifices. That gift, "the unsearchable riches," included all possible blessings, even "in heavenly places." That spiritual Temple, of which Christ is "the chief corner-stone," "a tried stone," "a sure foundation," "a precious stone," "a living stone," is already far advanced toward completion. How many "polished stones," and "lively stones," have been put into it! How much prayer, and praise, and toil, and holy living, and sacrifice, and consecrated mind and genius, have entered into the structure! How many saints in glory are looking down upon it, and watching its walls, with intense interest and thanksgiving, as they go up higher and higher, as the ages of time come and go! How many of the true "sons of God," even in this "evil and adulterous generation," are being fitted for the Master-Builder's use; and, one after another, are laid in their place, in that glorious edifice, and thereby contribute their "mite"

toward its completion! How many angels, from the heavenly places, through all the centuries, from Adam down, have watched the progress of this greatest work of God, and helped to gather and polish one after another the stones, rough and almost worthless in their original state, which have been used in carrying it on! Already are the skill, the wisdom, the resources, of the Divine Architect, illustriously displayed. Already are the lines of eternal beauty, and the proportions of infinite grandeur, and the richness of the Divine fullness, brought to view, even to the eye of mortal man, and far more to the eyes of saints and angels in heaven, in this achievement of Grace. Nature is eclipsed by it. Providence is cast into the shade. Indeed it already begins to appear that Nature and Providence are only subordinate parts of the universal system—only means to help on this one Supreme Work—lesser stars, revolving around this central Sun in the heavenly firmament.

And if such be the beauty and the glory of this spiritual Temple *now*, here, while incomplete, with its walls still unfinished, and its scaffolding not taken down; with its divine tracings and touches only seen in part, with its grand outlines, and adornments, and uses, only partially developed—what *will* it be, when its topmost stone shall reach unto heaven and be laid amid shouts of "Grace, grace, unto it"? When the lofty ideal of Eternal Wisdom and Grace shall stand out to the view of all intelligences, realized, *comp'ete*—complete in every part, complete in its grand moral symmetry and perfectness—not a stone wanting, not a mar or blemish in the whole vast structure—the one Glory of God's Everlasting Kingdom? And when the Lamb of God, who has achieved the glorious work, shall appear in the midst of this Living Temple, and consecrate it to the service of "Him who liveth for ever and ever," amidst the acclaim of "an innumerable company of angels," and of "the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven;" then, indeed, in so august a presence, with such a revelation dazzling the very skies, and rendering needless the light of the natural sun, the manifold wisdom of God will shine forever, and the "intent" of "the eternal purpose, purposed in Christ Jesus," will be apparent throughout all "heavenly places."

One of the saddest sights which meets the eye of the traveler is the architectural *ruins* of some vast historic structure, like the Coliseum at Rome, or the Areopagus and the Parthenon at Athens, or Jupiter Olympius, or the temple of Quorneth at Thebes, fallen into disuse, crumbling into dust under the hand of time—a gloomy solitude, an awful desolation, where once reigned life and beauty. And scarcely less mournful and suggestive are *unfinished* enterprises—the sight of tower, or monument, or pillars, or foundations, it may be, on a grand scale. But they are incomplete. The work is given over. Men began to build and were not able to finish. Or the ideal plan was found impracticable, or the purpose of the builders changed. And there they are to-day, the wrecks of miscarried plans, or monuments of human folly and weakness, voicing the vanity and instability of human purpose and achievement.

Conceive of such a catastrophe, if it were possible, overtaking God's "eternal purpose." Why, the very stars would be moved out of their courses by such an event. There would be consternation and weeping "in all heavenly places." Every saint in glory, and every saint below, would lose all heart, and sit down in blank despair. But, "glory to God in the highest," and on earth and in all heavenly places let there be rejoicing, and courage, and full assurance; for our God is "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." He changeth not. His heart, as well as his head and hand, is in Redemption's great work. And sooner shall sun and stars be left to wander from their orbits and dash together in wild confusion, and the whole material universe go down in darkness, than that this favorite purpose should fail Him.

It has not grown old on his hands. His resources have not failed. He is not disappointed in the working out of his grand ideal. He is not discouraged by the character of the material at his command; nor by the opposition of devils and wicked men to his work; nor even at the supineness and indifference, and often the unfaithfulness and treachery, of his friends. The work will never cease until it shall be complete in every part; the last touch be given to it. Ages will wear away. The centuries will come and go. Changes and vicissi-

tudes without number will spread over the face of nature, and over human society. But through them all, and in spite of them all, the "eternal purpose of God," who laid the first stone in Eden, will persevere and roll on the achievement. And when the last stroke of the hammer shall have sounded, and the entire work shall be complete, there being no further use for the world, which has served for the theatre of display—served as the scaffolding for the structure—it will be destroyed, and "a new heavens and a new earth, in which dwelleth righteousness," shall take its place. Never will it be that the sun, which gives light to our world, shall live to behold the foundations and walls of this Divine structure silent and deserted, and the genius of Desolation holding vigils over them. Never will it be that some celestial being, from some far-off planet, will be found sitting amid the ruins of this unaccomplished or fallen wonder, weeping over the failure of hope and expectation.

"The manifold wisdom of God" in the economy of Redemption is strikingly displayed in his so arranging and adjusting the infinite series of moral causes and effects as not to make Him "the author of sin," while permitting its existence; but, on the contrary, to show his abhorrence of it with "exceeding power." Also, so as not to impair the freedom and responsibility of the creature, but to give them greater significance; and, finally, so as not to give up the universe to evil; but, by a wonderful process of renovation, evoke a new and more glorious creation than that which sin had marred—a creation over whose sky not a cloud should ever flit, whose profound harmony no element of discord should ever disturb, even an "everlasting kingdom of righteousness and peace."

"The exceeding *sinfulness* of sin" is affectingly displayed in the cross of Christ. Its awfulness as a destructive force, as exciting the wrath of a righteous God, and drawing after it quick and terrible retribution, was sufficiently shown in the history of the rebellion in heavenly places. But it was reserved to *human* guilt to bring out into full sight the height, and depth, and malignity, and moral turpitude of sin, as a reigning power in hearts given over to it. So infinite is

the guilt of it seen to be, under the dispensation of grace, that its forgiveness on the part of a merciful God is *possible*, only by the expiation of a Divine sacrifice. So just, and so urgent, are the claims of external righteousness found to be, that not a soul of the fallen race of Adam can be restored to the Divine favor and life except on the ground of Christ's infinite righteousness—"the just" dying for "the unjust"—the sufferings of a vicarious Saviour substituted for the literal penalty of the broken law. So strong is the grip of sin found to be, when once fastened upon a creature; so utterly depraved becomes his nature under its dominion, that no power short of the Divine Spirit is found to be sufficient to loosen that grip and release him from his terrible thralldom, and new-create him into the likeness which sin has marred.

And look at the character of sin in the light of its treatment of the Divine Son of God. Such a character never appeared before nor since in human history, so perfect, so wise, so benevolent, so lofty and glorious. And yet, instigated by sin, no other character was ever so hated by mankind, so vilified by the world, so despised and evil entreated. And were the Divine Jesus on earth to-day, he would receive no better treatment from the sinners of this generation. "Crush the wretch," was the war-cry of Voltaire. And the sneers and the scoffs of modern infidelity; the blasphemies of the Strausses, Renans, and Ingersolls of the nineteenth century, are as bitter and devilish in spirit, in their essential malignity, as was the cry of Voltaire; nay, as was the shout of the mob in the streets of Jerusalem eighteen centuries ago, when they cried, "Crucify him, crucify him." Luke 23: 21. "His blood be on us, and on our children." Matt. 27: 25.

Not only is "sin's exceeding sinfulness," and "the manifold wisdom of God's eternal purpose" in treating it, brought out in singular clearness in the history of man's Redemption, but also the principle of Divine *Justice*. The doom of rebel angels was a warning not soon to be forgotten. Jehovah then unsheathed for the first time the sword of eternal justice, and took sudden and terrible vengeance on the guilty. By one

fell swoop of his almighty arm he struck down myriads of lofty spirits who had been exalted and honored by him in heavenly places. But that was the sin of rebellion, pure and simple, against sovereign authority. And it was instantly put down as such; crushed out by the hand of power. It was simply a matter of pure law and justice, guilt and punishment. It was a daring act of rebellion—sin suddenly towering by one maddened convulsive heave to the very height of the Throne, and as suddenly smitten in the pride of its power, and hurled into the nether depths by the omnipotent energy of a righteous law. It was a moral cyclone which swept over heavenly places, and disappeared forever; and the ruins it left along its path were forthwith all removed out of sight.

But the record of *human* guilt possesses other aspects, other elements, far more atrocious and heinous than a simple sudden, simultaneous outbreak of a proud mutinous spirit. Sin, on this earthly theatre, has acted out "all its wickedness," and put on a character, if possible, infinitely more odious and revolting, more devilish and damning, than it had time or opportunity to develop in heaven. Here it has reigned, almost at will, for six decades of centuries. Here it has had ample time to intrench itself in this entire earthly system; to corrupt human nature and human society, in their entirety; to gather force and venom in the current of thought and life, in laws and customs, and institutions, and philosophies, and superstitions, and false systems of faith, so as to be able to defy God and man; and to carry on its work of ruin to the bitter end, except so far as the God of sovereign grace sees fit to interfere to restrain its power and defeat its mad purpose.

Here, too, sin's inherent power and turpitude appear, in that it parts with none of its bitterness and malignity even under the reign of Mercy, in the face of a Father's love, and a Saviour's dying entreaty. In a world full of the proofs of God's benignity; in contact with all the motives and forces of Christianity, sin goes on to harden its heart, to corrupt its ways, to trample on righteousness and love, and to defy, from year to year, from age to age, from century to century, the justice of a righteous and sin-hating Jehovah. Surely sin never before put on such a dreadful character. Surely the

justice of God had never before received such provocation. Surely no creature of guilt ever before deserved and challenged so dreadful a doom. What an inconceivably dreadful character has human guilt wrought for itself in the eye of angels, in all the ages of its dominion since it broke out in the garden! If earth could speak, what a tale would it rehearse in the ear of Heaven! If man, in the defilement and moral ugliness of his nature, should stand forth among the sons of God, how would "the shame of his nakedness appear!" What an object of loathing, contempt, and indignation would he be!

Now, it is under such circumstances, in relation to creatures so steeped in moral depravity, in a world so long, and, humanly speaking, so hopelessly given over to the dominion of evil, and in the face of sixty centuries of matured depravity, intrenched and rooted in vast systems of idolatry, and superstition, and iniquity, and irreligion, that Divine Justice is called to act. Is it possible that a solitary sinner in our world can escape? Is it possible that any plan of Divine Wisdom can be devised, and carried into effect, that shall secure the restoration of such sinners, that shall redeem such a world, and yet not break down the sanctions of law, not outrage eternal Justice, so awfully strict, and so jealous of the Divine honor? What a revelation of "the manifold wisdom of God" "unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places" must be made in respect to justice, when they see "a multitude which no man can number" coming up out of the apostasy in the likeness and liberty of God, and entering heaven, and taking possession of mansions in glory; and, at the same time, God's character and government have not only lost nothing thereby, but have actually put on new claims to gratitude and obedience!

The Divine Justice never put on such robes of light—such robes of dazzling splendor, as on Calvary, when it received the sacrifice of the Son of God, incarnated in human nature, as a propitiation for man's sin. And at the same time, while just as strict, just as holy, just as majestic, as before, the awful radiance is, somehow, softened, the goodness of the law, even in its "severity," is seen and felt, the infinite integrity of

moral virtue is made to appear as never before, and we are constrained to see and to confess that "sin *is* an evil and a bitter thing," and that God can do no less than punish it with "everlasting destruction from his presence, and from the glory of his power," unless it be repented of in this life, and through Christ forgiven.

"The manifold wisdom of God" in Redemption is further revealed to principalities and powers in heavenly places, as illustrating his *veracity and faithfulness in keeping covenant with his people.* None of the other works of God pledge his word, commit him to any given course or principle of action. Neither Nature nor Providence ever gave the creature a solitary promise, one assurance or pledge of divine interposition in his favor. They may contain good for him, in some form, or in some period of the future, now or hereafter. But he has no *assurance* of it, not so much as an intimation. They are silent. He can know nothing about it until it is realized, if realized at all. His future is all uncertain—an absolute blank. God in no way commits himself to his creatures by any manifestation or law of nature or providence. But how different is the dispensation of grace! The whole system of Redemption is written over with promises, assurances, covenants, pledges, which the everlasting God has been pleased to give, or to make with his people.

The first step in the process of accomplishing his eternal purpose was a covenant with his Son, in relation to man's redemption—a covenant which involved every perfection of the Godhead, and pledged all the resources of his kingdom to the work. The very first revelation made to man after his fall was a promise—a promise, too, of infinite significance, reaching down through all time and all dispensations, pledging the Divine veracity, and committing the Godhead to the accomplishment of his redeeming purpose in a way that leaves no retreat from it possible. That first promise in a thousand varying forms, has been renewed, confirmed, repeated, and enlarged, times without number, and on various occasions, and in different ages—to individuals, to families, to nations, to communities, to the Church collectively. God has even confirmed

it by an oath: "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." Heb. 6: 17, 18.

These Divine promises form one of the most interesting, as well as peculiar, features of the Scriptures. They open up to the minds of both saint and angel an inspiring, a comforting, an assuring field of study and contemplation. They let us into the inner heart of God, so to speak – into the secret counsels of eternity. And they lay bare the Future; not only the Future of our individual life and destiny, but the Future of Time, the Future of human History, the Future of our Race, the Future of the World, and even the scenes, the transactions, the awards of the last Judgment, and of the Eternal state of the dead. *Wonderful*, most wonderful, are these Divine disclosures! We are so *familiar* with them, and have been from childhood, that they fail to affect us as they should do. But there is nothing more wonderful in the history of God's being, or in the history of his kingdom. There is nothing in all nature half so wonderful, so full of interest to every soul who hopes one day to inherit these promises. The Christian can in no way so animate his hope, so fire his zeal, so lift himself upward into the heavenly life, as by studying these promises, imbuing his heart with their spirit, flashing the light of them down upon his path, and tracing the silver lines which they run through human thought, and experience, and destiny, up to the very Lamb of God, enthroned in heaven, dispensing eternal life to all who believe the promises, and on the strength of that belief forsake all for Christ, and take up their cross and follow him even down to death.

It is noteworthy that every promise God has ever made to his creatures is made *to* Christ in our behalf, or *in* Christ to the believer. He, the Divine Redeemer of men, is the source, the centre, the channel, the procuring cause, the end, the substance, the glory, the fulfillment, of them all. They are "all yea and amen in Christ Jesus." With what amazing delight must angels, from their heavenly places, contemplate

these covenants, pledges, promises, in their wonderful and varying phases, in their historic relations, developments, and fulfillments. What opportunities do they afford to study the character of God, to observe his eternal and unchanging truthfulness, the absolute "immutability of his counsel," the undeviating sacredness of his pledge, the everlasting solidity of the structure of human Redemption, which was conceived in the Eternal Mind before the world or the stars had existed, and which has been pushed steadily and uninterruptedly onward toward completion through all the centuries of human guilt.

A final thought on this subject is this: The *immutability and permanence* of the Divine government are being illustriously discovered "to principalities and powers in heavenly places," by means of the Church which Christ is redeeming to himself out of this world of sinners. This world has been the scene, the theatre, of many amazing *changes*, since Christ began the work of its redemption. Earthquakes have rent its mountains, rocked its plains to and fro, and engulfed its cities. The Deluge has swept over it from pole to pole; storm and tempest, fire, and war, and pestilence, have ravished and laid it waste. Nations have risen, decayed, and gone down. Kingdoms have grown to colossal dimensions, and then waned, or been suddenly overthrown. Sceptres of power, of fame, of thought, have been wielded over prostrate peoples and realms and then themselves have crumbled to ashes. Social, political, and religious revolutions have upheaved society, and made it like the sea, unstable and never at rest.

But *Christ's* Kingdom abideth ever the same. The sceptre of our Immanuel is an everlasting sceptre. Christianity can never wax old, or decay; for every element which enters into it is divine, immutable, enduring, as God himself. The Church of Christ retains to-day her original character, moral and spiritual. Her doctrines, and laws, and institutions, all remain intact. The lapse of time; the impairing and shaking of this whole terrestrial system; the decay, and passing away of all earthly power and greatness, have not weakened in the least Zion's strength, nor disturbed her foundations. She embodies, in all ages, among all nations, and peoples, and tongues, one

and the same divine Spirit, rests on the same eternal truths, is sure of the same covenant-keeping Power, maintains the same spiritual character, and is looking forward to, and preparing for, the same exalted destiny in the future.

The *continued existence and immutability of Christ's Kingdom*, in a world so given to change and decay, is a grand attestation of the energy of Omnipotent Love, to the unchanging character of the Divine government, and to the vitality and ultimate supremacy of those principles which the work of Redemption is designed to uphold and establish forever, in God's universal kingdom. Greater changes are *still* to occur in this mundane sphere before Christianity shall be complete. Nations will be convulsed and overthrown. Kingdoms will pass away, and dynasties close. The false philosophies and false religions, and the iniquitous compacts and institutions which the reign of sin has brought forth, will all come to an end. The old order of things will be overturned, and, "behold, all things will become new." Over the whole face of society, over the entire aspect of the social, political, and religious world, vast changes will take place. Human History will not only record all these wondrous revolutions in the future ages, but will itself close, come to an end. For the earth itself shall wax old, and the moon shall wane, and the stars shall fall, and the heavens pass away with a great noise, and the grave shall deliver up its dead, and the judgment-day of the world shall have come; and a new dispensation of things will then begin. But "the stone cut out of the mountain without hands," as seen in Daniel's vision, shall "smite and break in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver and the gold," and become 'a great mountain and fill the earth." Christ is the only *living* founder of religious faiths in the world to-day. Mohammed, Confucius, Zoroaster—all are dead! And their systems are dying out—sure as the ages come and go. But no signs of decay are visible in the religion of the Cross. The Author of Christianity, as well as Christianity itself, is a living, active factor in human history to-day, as really as he was eighteen hundred years ago. No one thinks or speaks of Christ as dead! His power over men is still the power of a living personality. And there is immense vitality in this fact.

The System will live and triumph because its Divine Founder and incarnated Force is alive to carry on his work; and his Spirit is here to second his endeavors, to energize, direct and crown with success the appointed instrumentalities — the Word, the ministry, the Sabbath, the family—by which it is to be accomplished.

The Future of the Church, on earth and in heaven, is not an uncertain or dubious matter. It is not contingent, in any sense, on man's faithfulness or unfaithfulness, sufficiency or insufficiency; or on the progress of society or its retrocession; or on the world's material growth and prosperity, or the decadence of all human greatness. If there be anything sure beneath the sun, or in heaven, it is that the Church of the Redeemer shall yet possess the earth. It is that the kingdoms of this world shall become the Kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever." Rev. 11: 15. The period of the Church's millennial glory is not a dream, a fancy, but is to be a blessed reality. "For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." Seers have beheld it in vision. Prophets have foretold it. A thousand promises and pledges point to it. Providence is rolling it on. Saints have prayed and waited for it in all the ages. The Apocalypse gives the shadows of the things which are comprehended in the immense system of agencies and events which is to work out this final change. "What breadths of time, what cycles of civilization, what revolutions of empire, what conflicts of kingdoms, what powers of good and evil, visible and invisible, working with and counterworking one another—even down to the end of the world!" And as the unchanging God purposed it, before human history began, and has been pursuing the glorious end ever since he pronounced the curse on the old serpent, and is able to make good his word, and has confirmed that word by an oath—so sure is it, that before Time shall end, and the world be burned with fire, "the people of the saints of the Most High" shall enter into rest. The Devil shall be bound. The Cross shall prevail. Saints shall rejoice, and the earth shall be glad. Zion shall come up from the wilderness, leaning on the arm of her Beloved. The days of her long captivity shall be ended. Nation after nation, clime after clime, shall

hasten to do homage to her King. And "in all God's holy mountain there shall be nothing to molest or make afraid."

But our hope for the future of the world is not in our civilization—the product of so many forces; nor in the intellectual and social advancement of the race, great as that may be; nor yet even in the mission of the Christian Church, which is outwardly enlarging her borders, and laying under contribution, more and more, the elements of spiritual power. But the ground of hope is the vital fact, that CHRIST'S KINGDOM is set up here—Christ's presence, and Spirit, and character, and truth, are the dominant forces in that Kingdom—and that the Divine perfections are pledged to conserve, and carry forward, and consummate in eternal glory, this spiritual dominion. And the final outcome of this moral and spiritual conflict of the ages will be the triumph and reign of the Prince of Peace on earth, as a prelude to his reign in the Everlasting Kingdom of the Future.

And having outlived all earthly things, and Time itself; having stood forth, fair, complete, unshaken, without one sign of decay or even the trace of fire on her garments, amid the wreck of the world, and the final conflagration; having "accomplished her warfare," and witnessed the end of all terrestrial things, and gathered to her Saviour-King the glory of a completed dominion, the redeemed Church will be caught up into heaven, to reign and to shine with Jesus for ever and ever.

Surely there will be a lesson in all this, to be read and pondered by "principalities and powers in heavenly places." There is a light, beaming up into the highest heaven from this lower world, greatly as sin has obscured and darkened it, that never shone out of any other world—a light so dazzling even at "midday" that when it encompassed Saul of Tarsus on his way to Damascus, it struck him blind, and felled him to the earth and those that were with him—a light that shall yet flood the heaven of heavens with a Divine radiance, and make the whole family of God to "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." The contemplation, the rehearsed history of Christ's Mediatorial work, from its dawn in the purpose of the Father to its splendid consummation in heaven, will furnish the lyres

of angels with a new theme, and excite the alleluias of the saints.

As the chosen theatre of Redemption, our world is honored above all worlds. Little in itself, an insignificant speck in the universe of matter, surrounded by myriads of orbs immensely larger and grander; yet in the eternal purpose of the Godhead it was chosen to be the theatre of the grandest and the greatest of all God's moral displays; and was arranged, and peopled by him, with reference to this very end. Down into this obscure corner, the eternal Son of God was to descend and ally the Divine nature with the Human, and make the stupendous exhibition of the Cross, and plant the germs of an everlasting Kingdom, and work out, to a glorious completion, the principle of Mediation. For this reason earth is the centre of the highest moral attraction, the theatre of the grandest moral forces, in God's universe. It has drawn to it the attention of beings far off in the exalted and numberless "heavenly places." The Father, the Son, and the Spirit, the triune Jehovah, is here at work as in no other world, signally magnifying his Word above all his name, revealing his moral perfections, illustrating and confirming the principles of his government, and preparing a people, whose salvation is to harmonize all antagonistic forces, and bring together in one vast commonwealth all the obedient sons of God.

That it is a peculiar and immense *privilege*, to live in this world, which Christ is seeking to redeem, which Christ has honored, by planting his cross in it, no one can doubt. We have our being at the very focus of this moral revelation, at the very centre of these wondrous manifestations, in the very midst of these stirring scenes and realities, at a point where all redeeming influences meet, and where we must penitently submit to God, and come into the life of the cross, or breast a tide of wrath that no power can resist. Life, being, influence, destiny, are invested with peculiar, nay, with awful sanctity and responsibility, brought thus into immediate contact and relations with the whole Mediatorial Kingdom. It is our high privilege, as it is our solemn duty, to come under the baptism of the Cross; to "fellowship the sufferings of Christ;" to take

up our cross and follow him; to serve him in newness of life; to devote all we have, and all that grace has made us, to advance his Kingdom here on earth. And having witnessed a good confession before men, to die in the faith, and join the triumphant throng on high. But such a privilege imposes a corresponding *responsibility*. Sin is nowhere so sinful; life is nowhere so sacred; the doom of the incorrigible is nowhere so tremendous, as here, in the noonday Sun of Divine Mercy; here in the centre of redeeming influences; here in a world hallowed by the presence and the footsteps of the Saviour, and consecrated by his love, his tears, and his blood, all freely given for man's salvation. To perish from such a world; to sin on in defiance of God in the face of such manifestations; to resist to the last all the moral forces of Christianity, and defeat God's merciful eternal designs, will be to pluck down ruin absolutely measureless, as well as endless.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE RESURRECTION: AN IMPORTANT PART OF CHRIST'S REDEMPTIVE WORK: A NEW EPOCH IN ITS HISTORY.

"If a man die, shall he live again?" was the agonized cry of a human heart in what many conceive to be the oldest history or biography that has come down to us out of the Past. Reasoning with his unbelief, or doubts, Job appeals to nature, and says to his disquieted heart: "For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground, yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant. But man dieth and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?" Job 14: 7–10.

This same cry has been the burden of the human heart in all the ages. It has been voiced to the heavens in whispered accents and in thunder tones. Man has looked up into the skies, and thought to read his destiny in the stars. He has queried nature, and endeavored anxiously to build up the doctrine of immortality from analogy. He has observed the seasons, and tried to gather hope on that field. And as a last resort, he has turned his eye within, and out of the longings of the human soul has sought to construct an argument that shall satisfy reason, and silence the instinctive fears of annihilation. But he has got no farther than the patriarch of the olden time. The most erudite and cultured, the most advanced thinkers and philosophers of antiquity, never attained to this knowledge; never devised or stumbled upon the doctrine of the Resurrection; never so much as hinted at it, much less taught it in any of their philosophies. When Paul stood forth on Mars Hill and proclaimed it to the Athenian philosophers,

as a settled fundamental doctrine of Christianity, they pronounced him a "babbler." It was not worth consideration: it was only a vagary of a fanatic.

And yet there is no doctrine, or fact, pertaining to the Christian system, more clearly, or authoritatively, or conspicuously set forth in the New Testament Scriptures, than this same doctrine of the Resurrection of the dead, which the philosophers of Greece scoffed at, and which the wisdom of all antiquity failed even to conceive. So essential indeed is this very doctrine to the integrity of Christianity, as presented in the Scriptures, that, as a system of religious belief, it must stand or fall with it. It is the *pivotal* fact on which hinge all the other doctrines of redemption. If Christ be risen, as the "first-fruits" of them that sleep; if we have in his resurrection the pledge and earnest of his people's resurrection, at the last day, to everlasting life; if he have power to quicken whom he will, and revive the buried dust of man, in the last day—then is the gospel witness true, and Christian hope shall not be disappointed. On the contrary, if the Founder of Christianity, who, as a historical fact, was put to death in Judea eighteen hundred years ago, remains under the power of death—is a *dead* Christ—then the gospels are untruthful and worthless—there is no Jesus! there is no salvation! immortality has *not* been brought to light in the Christian faith.

Hence, as we might anticipate, we find that the early preachers of the gospel laid very great stress on the doctrine of Christ's Resurrection. It was a cardinal fact with them. They bore special witness of it. They challenged attention to it—challenged it on the very scene of the crucifixion, and while the fact was yet fresh in the public mind. It was the Cross they preached, the Cross they gloried in, the Cross they magnified and held up to the gaze of the world, as the one hope of man. Not the cross of a *dead* Christ: that would have been the extreme of folly: that would have defeated all hope of success, and made them the butt of ridicule both with Jew and Greek. It was the Cross of a *risen*, living, reigning, all-conquering Saviour, which they testified to, and preached everywhere, and gloried in, and died for. Unless the reader has given special attention to this matter, he will be surprised, on a personal in-

vestigation, to see the wonderful significance and prominence given to this doctrine of the Resurrection in the doctrinal epistles of the New Testament Scriptures, and in the early belief and life of the Christian Church. One of the most extended, and masterly, and glorious arguments in the whole inspired literature of believers is the argument of Paul in his first epistle to the Corinthians, on this very topic. He reasons out the glorious doctrine, in the light of the Cross, with wonderful skill and fullness. He challenges unbelief to deny or gainsay it. He boldly admits the momentous issue: the Cross must stand or fall according to the truth or falsity of the teachings of the apostles as to the fact of Christ having risen from the dead. His argument may be stated in a word. If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen, and our preaching is vain, and your faith is also vain: we are yet in our sins. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept. And Christ having risen, and thereby destroyed the last enemy, Death, and abolished the Grave, the promises, the pledges, which he has made to his people, are as sure of accomplishment, in due time, as was his own resurrection.

The Resurrection of believers to everlasting life is the next topic in the related series of contemplations which I have attempted to present, in their order, to interest, animate, and enlarge the faith and hope of Christian believers. In this, as in the other points discussed, it is not my purpose to argue the resurrection with unbelievers, but simply to present some aspects of it to the minds of those who accept the doctrine, with a view to practical effect.

1. The doctrine of the Resurrection is *purely a doctrine of Divine Revelation*. Man, by the light of reason, has never discovered it. It was a doctrine unknown, and unheard of, in the purlieus of ancient science and philosophy. Outside of the Jewish Scriptures, you cannot find so much as a hint or intimation of it in the world of human thought. Notwithstanding the inward natural longing of man for immortality, and the analogies discoverable in nature, though not really discovered

until Christ came, you can find no trace of the doctrine, or a belief of the doctrine, in any of the writings of the ancients. That it is obscurely taught in the Old Testament Scriptures, I think, admits not of a doubt. That Job, and Moses, and Enoch, and Abraham, and all the patriarchs and prophets of the olden times, had visions of it, I believe. Job's language is capable of rational interpretation on no other hypothesis: "For I know," he affirms, "that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me." Job 19: 25–27. Still is it true, that the doctrine is nowhere formally or positively declared by inspiration until the "Great Teacher" came forth from God to mankind: we deduce it by inference or construction. But in the *New* Testament, the doctrine is made to assume a positive character, and to put on large proportions. Christ has not only "abolished death," but has "brought life and immortality to light in the gospel." 2 Tim. 1: 10. And not only this, but he has *magnified* the doctrine; brought it to the front in the system of the Christian faith; made his own resurrection, as the "first-fruits of them that sleep,' the leading testimony which the apostles and early preachers of the gospel were to bear to the world.

Yet so consoling, so sublime a doctrine, was hidden from the world, save in a few obscure intimations given to a single small and isolated people on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean. The mind of man was "darkened." Not one ray of light shone down into the grave. Death was an eternal sleep. No morning was ever to rise on the dark valley. Man was "vanity." Generations were "swept away as with a flood." "Man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets." "As the beast dieth, so he dieth." "Worms consume his flesh, and where is he?" This was the sad refrain, this the melancholy picture, this the despairing creed of the race, until He who is "the Resurrection and the Life" immortal, appeared on the scene. The path of human life was not only vain and brief, but it led down into midnight darkness, and not a ray of hope shot athwart the grave. With fears op-

pressed, and instincts recoiling from corruption and annihilation, man, in all the ages, called upon philosophy, or upon the gods of heathen thought, to cheer his trembling soul. But he called in vain. No voice responded from out the heavens or from all the earth. None returned after death to tell what lies beyond. The dismal conclusion of human reason is, "Here is the end of man; from the dust he came forth, and to dust he returns, and that dust mingles with mother earth." "At this sullen moment of despair, Revelation approaches, and with a command, at once awful and delightful, exclaims, 'Lazarus, come forth!' In a moment the earth heaves; the tomb uncloses; and a new form, bright as the sun, rises from the earth, and, stretching itself toward heaven, loses itself from the astonished sight."

2. The Resurrection of the dead is a doctrine which *applies only to mankind*, the immediate subjects of Christ's Redemptive work. Death is an event, an experience, of singular mystery and awfulness, in the conception of men. There is something so terrible in it, that mankind universally recoil from it, instinctively, and live in perpetual dread of it. No matter what the condition or character, what the faith or unbelief, what the age, whether childhood or old age, whether civilized or barbarian, whether a scoffer at religion and a disbeliever in a future state, or fortified by Christian hope and faith—it matters not:—death is "the king of terrors" to man. He cannot face death with calmness or indifference. The pains of dissolution—the great sudden change consequent upon death—the actual separation of soul and body, here so closely and mysteriously united—the decay and return of the body to dust, and the translation of the soul to a new and distant sphere of being, face to face with the here unseen God and eternal realities—there is something in all this, familiar as our eyes and thoughts have grown to be in the course of years with the whole subject, which affects us strangely, affects us as nothing else does, and which invests death with peculiar and absorbing interest to us, whenever we contemplate it in the light of a near personal experience.

We have no knowledge and no intimation from the Scriptures, and certainly none from any other source, that

death has ever entered any world except *this:* that any orders of rational and immortal intelligences, save mankind, have ever fallen under his terrible dominion. There was *sin* in heaven, and a terrible punishment inflicted upon the guilty. But there was no *death*, other than a spiritual one. The grim image of this monster, which we so much dread, did not appear there. His dark and chilling shadow never fell across the pathway of sinning angels. The penalty in the Eden dispensation was death: "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." But no such penalty was attached to the dispensation "in heavenly places." Death's dominion and ravages are therefore confined to earth, to man, to time—for Death itself is a conquered foe, and will perish in the last day; and the Grave will be abolished in the resurrection. But this world of human guilt and pollution is given over to this mortal enemy; and here his reign is supreme and universal. None escape. Not a child of Adam, save Enoch and Elijah, not even the Lord of life, escapes, or can escape, the penalty of sin, in this respect. Jesus himself cannot save his people from death and the grave, any more than he can save himself from so dreadful an experience. He had to die in order to conquer death. He had to be laid away in the tomb that he might abolish the grave. His people have to go through the mysterious, tremendous experience of death, and the grave, and the resurrection, in order to the completion of Christ's work of grace in them and upon them—the moral purification of the complete man, body, soul, and spirit.

This power—the power of resurrecting a dead and decayed race—of calling up from their graves myriads of bodies, long ago buried, and gone back to dust, and restoring that dust to its identical living form, and expression, and mechanism, and again tenanting them each with its own immortal spirit—this power will be displayed only in this little world and on the race which Christ came to save. It is a significant fact—not an incident but an essential part of the pre-arrangement—that the cross was planted in "Golgotha," the 'place of a skull"—in a world of graves, over the buried dust of unnumbered generations—in a world where Death's sceptre is absolute and universal. The trumpet of redemption will sound out over a

world of dead, and dying, and buried humanity, the dust of which is scattered over all the earth. As subjects of this awful and mysterious change and personal experience, mankind must present a field of special interest for the contemplation of the inhabitants of "heavenly places." The restoration to life, from death and the grave, of all the myriad millions of Adam's race, quickened, rehabilitated, raised up in their personal identity, and perfectness, will be indeed an amazing scene. It will be a far more august and impressive scene than the original act of creation.

3. The Resurrection of the dead is the *work of Christ in his office as Redeemer.* The New Testament emphatically and repeatedly declares this. It connects it with his redeeming work, and makes it a necessary part of it. The resurrection of the body is no more the act of the Father, distinctively, than is the resurrection of the soul to newness of life. Neither of them is his. He has committed the entire scheme of Salvation to the Son. The apostle preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead: "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." Christ himself directly affirms the fact: "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." John 11: 25. The raising of the dead is directly ascribed to Christ, and is represented as the last work to be accomplished in the earthly stage of Redemption.

The Resurrection of believers, as presented in the Scriptures is an appropriate and necessary work for Christ to perform. The penalty of man's transgression was *death;* and to redeem him from the power of death, it was necessary that Christ himself "should taste death for every man," and thereby be able to satisfy the penalty of the law, and in due time redeem his people out of the hands of death. Christ also came to save the bodies of his people, just as truly as their souls. He came to restore to them the principle of "immortality," to cleanse them from impurity, and raise them at length to the heavenly state. The Church has well-nigh overlooked this part of Christ's great work The body is greatly inferior to the soul, and, in some respects, if possible, it has felt the curse

of sin even more than the spiritual part of man. At least the degradation, the bitterness, the terrible effects of the apostasy are most apparent on the body. And we have naturally come, even Christians, to regard and speak of the body of sin with a sort of contempt, with a pious hatred, and almost to wish that we could sever all connection with it, and bury it forever out of sight and out of memory.

But in this we greatly sin. We know not what to do. The human body is not to be thus contemned and vilified. We forget that it was made in the very "image of God." We forget that it is the very form which Christ has honored, as he has honored no other creature form, by allying it to his divine nature. We forget that Adam was the head, the climax, the perfected glory, of this whole lower creation—a workmanship that God himself had complacency in, and pronounced to be "very good." We forget that the glorified form of "the Lamb in the midst of the throne" is the body of a man—this same form which we despise, and abuse, and sin against, and wish to be rid of. We forget that the new-creating Spirit will restore the original beauty, and integrity, and immortality of the body, as well as of the soul; and that the form that shall arise from the dust and corruption of the grave is to be "like unto Christ's own glorious body"—a form of transcendent beauty, and dignity, and grandeur. Remembering all this, the Christian should look upon his body with reverence and sacred interest—as "the temple of the Holy Ghost"—as a "vessel unto honor and not dishonor"—as a part of Christ's grand redemption purchase, which he will finally purify, and refine, and fit for exalted service in his heavenly Kingdom, and which in his sight is so precious that no part of it shall remain in the grave.

Christ's work as Redeemer would be *incomplete* if any part of our being were abandoned to corruption; if a solitary enemy were left to triumph. But he leaves nothing undone. Both soul and body are completely rescued. Not a remnant of the curse is left. The believer can commit his body to the grave with the same assurance that he can commit his soul to Christ in the dying hour. His dust will sleep in Jesus until the resurrection, and then arise at his bidding. So that with his

latest breath, in anticipation of this glorious experience, he can exclaim: "O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

4. The *manner* of this Resurrection-work indicates its great importance, and is in keeping with the other grand achievements of the Cross. In what terrific and sublime imagery do the Scriptures portray the scenes of the Resurrection! In mid-heaven a "great white throne" will suddenly appear, and in the midst of it the Son of Man, the crucified and risen Jesus, now the Judge of quick and dead, and myriads of angels in flaming fire attend him. Before him "the heavens are rolled together as a scroll," and "the elements melt with fervent heat." By a word he accomplished the work of creation, and now by a word he accomplishes the greater miracle of the resurrection. At the sound of the archangel's trumpet, the graves will open, and all the dead, both small and great, will come forth and up into life, and stand in the awful presence of the appointed Judge. The sea will give up all its dead, and what a multitude it will be! The dust of all who have lived and died will be made alive, and the earth will be suddenly peopled with myriads of millions of animated forms, fresh from the long sleep of the grave, and all looking up into the face of the enthroned Judge.

How will the man of Nazareth, the sufferer of Calvary, the weeper over Jerusalem, the tender, pleading Saviour, the humble suppliant at the door of the sinner's heart, "his locks wet with the dews of the night"—how will he appear to his people, how will he appear to his enemies, who have scoffed at him, and cursed him, and refused to have him to rule over them—amid the scenes of that tremendous day! Is it strange that the Bible should affirm, "that some will wake to shame and everlasting contempt;" that some will "call to the rocks and the mountains to fall on them and hide them from the face of Him that sitteth upon the throne," in that awful day? What glory and what majesty will crown the Redeemer at that appearing! What a stupendous illustration and confirmation of

the Saviour's power, and grace, and faithfulness, will be the Resurrection of all the dead! In the twinkling of an eye the immense living population of the globe will undergo a change equivalent to dying and rising. The triumph will be complete.

What amazing interests were suspended on the event of *Christ's own rising!* What days were those which intervened between Friday and "the first day of the week!" Where had Christianity been had the tomb of Joseph retained the body of Jesus—had he not verified his own predictions? And what a world of interests and hopes are suspended on the promised resurrection of the *saints*. How many disembodied saints in glory are waiting for that day. How many myriads of bodies have been committed to the grave in certain hope of the resurrection of the just. How many promises and hopes wait for the fulfillment of that event. How many parted friends are waiting there to be rejoined. Christ declares the day coming. The Church longs for it. We have the "first-fruits" of it already in the rising of Christ. Shall the harvest ripen, and be gathered? Momentous question! All Heaven is in expectation of it. The dust of sleeping millions, who died in the faith, and who rest in certain hope of the resurrection unto life, calls for it. The work of Redemption itself is a failure without it.

And is it a *doubtful* matter? Have we not the pledge, the assurance of it, in Christ's resurrection? Paul, in his grand argument, to which I have referred, proves the general resurrection of mankind in this way: Christ predicted his own rising on the third day, and he actually arose at the time predicted. He has thereby proved both his power to do everything, and his veracity in all his declarations. Now, he has declared in the most positive terms that he will raise up in the last day all that are in their graves. Hence his own resurrection is a complete proof of the resurrection of mankind. The pledges will be redeemed. The glorious hour will come. "The tomb of the world shall open at the bidding of Him who called Lazarus from his grave, and all its imprisoned dust come forth to life; and the innumerable trophies of redeeming grace will be gathered into the train of the mighty Victor; and then, with a shout that will ring through the universe, will the whole

ascend up into heaven and take possession of the 'many mansions prepared for them.'" Angels having received "the first-fruits," in the raised body of Christ, and having waited through long years of expectation, will now "shout the harvest home." And such a harvest as that will be, of renewed and beautified forms, of perfected and glorified humanity, of rejoicing and beatific intelligences, all safely garnered in heaven! Amazing *Power*, that by a word, "in the twinkling of an eye," can change a scene of universal desolation, even death's dark domain, into such a scene of heavenly life and glory! O amazing *grace*, that can transform a mass of inert and worthless matter into a world of spiritual beauty and immortal life!

The Resurrection will unfold to the universe a scene of unparalleled interest and grandeur. With what feelings of mingled wonder and gratitude will the dawn of that day be witnessed which is to consummate it! It will be the day of Christ's peculiar manifestation; the day that will inaugurate his everlasting kingdom; the day of vindication to the Divine Redeemer, and to his Church; the day that is to witness a completed salvation begun before the foundation of the world. Now will the power, and grace, and love, and faithfulness of the Saviour shine out as never before, and fill all heaven with rejoicing. Now shall that prophecy be fulfilled: "Unto me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear." The whole creation will then do homage to the reigning Jesus. "Thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, in heavenly places," shall fall prostrate at his feet. And they who have scoffed at the name of Jesus, and defied his power, will now be constrained to own his sovereignty, and minister to his praise.

There are many curious and interesting questions connected with the Resurrection, which philosophy has troubled itself about, and at which unbelief has stumbled. Paul has sufficiently answered this class: "But some men will say, How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die: and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body

that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body. So also is the resurrection of the dead." 1 Cor. 15: 35–38. Passing these by as of no practical value, even if it were possible to answer them, I shall consider but a single question relating to this branch of the subject, viz., Will the resurrection body be the same body that died? Although this question involves metaphysical difficulties, still it is important in a theological sense. There has been a world of speculation on this point, which has only darkened counsel. The majority of those who have argued on the side of unbelief have failed to settle an important preliminary question, viz., What is meant by *the same body?* The question has two answers—a scientific and a popular one. If the answer is restricted to a *scientific* statement, then I answer, it is *not* the same body. That were an impossibility, and the Scriptures do not teach such a resurrection. If the question may be answered in the *popular* meaning—and that is the meaning beyond question given to it in the Scriptures—then I answer, unhesitatingly, it *is* the same body.

The body raised is *not* the same body as to its *constituent elements.* That is a scientific impossibility. For the elements which compose the body living, are all the while changing. The atoms which constitute it are changed entirely every few years. The waste of life alone would at seventy be equal to many bodies. And after death, the particles are separated by the process of decomposition, and those atoms are scattered everywhere, and enter into ten thousand new combinations. What multitudes of mankind are buried in the sea, and are eaten by fishes, and by the monsters of the deep. More are consumed with fire, and pass away in smoke and ashes. Burial-places exist for only a few generations at furthest. At the resurrection probably not one body in a million will be raised up in the precise locality of its sepulture, and even in that case, a thousand chances to one, the actual dust buried there will not be there then. So that it were physically impossible to produce in the resurrection body the exact particles which formed the body at death.

And what necessity is there that it should be so? It is

not the atoms composing the body which constitute its identity, or its integrity. It is the arrangement, the constitution, the expression, of these particles. It is the same body at twenty as at a hundred, and yet how many times has every particle in it been changed! The resurrection body will be the body that died and was buried, though not one atom which enters into its physical composition be the same. But the identity will be there, the exact fac-simile. And that body will be recognized by all: by the man himself, and by all who knew him on earth. And hence the Scripture teaching will be literally and historically true, though not true in a scientific sense. And the power of Christ in the resurrection will be just as real, just as stupendous and wonderful, as if the scattered dust of each dead body of all the myriads that lived in the world were kept absolutely distinct, and at the sound of the last trumpet should come together, bone to bone, member to member. There has been a world of nonsense, both written and preached, on this subject, both in favor of and against the doctrine of the Resurrection.

It will *not* be the same body in respect to its *conditions, and modes of existence,* and even its qualities. For we are expressly told, that "flesh and blood cannot enter the kingdom of heaven; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." 1 Cor. 15: 50. A condition that involves decay, change, termination, cannot belong to a body that is immortal in its very nature, and therefore superior to decay or end. A body that is localized, confined to a narrow sphere of action by its own inherent laws, is not at all adapted to the physical condition of the heavenly world. There will be a *diff rence*, a very great difference, in the body raised, contrasted with the body buried. The full extent, or even the precise character of the difference, we are not told, and our philosophy cannot discover it. We have hints, however, on the subject, and they are significant, and suggest glorious possibilities. The apostle, in his statement of the doctrine, specifies several particulars in which the body raised will be superior to the body sown.

1. "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption." The body has come under the law of sin. It is corrupt in

every part, inasmuch as it is the seat of the animal passions, which have been perverted and made instruments of evil. The whole body has been vilely prostituted by the spirit, and must needs be purified. So fearful, so total, is the taint of sin upon it, that absolute decomposition of the component parts must take place, and the work of building it up begin at the very foundation. It will be raised free from this element. The curse will be taken off; the taint removed; the law of purity established; and in every member, every organ, and sense, and function, it will be morally, as well as physically, complete. And as sin was the cause and occasion of disease, derangement, waste, and physical suffering, the new body will be wholly free from all these evils which so afflict us here. It will be fresh, vigorous, buoyant, a perfect and divinely beautiful mechanism, even more so than when it originally came from the Creator's hands.

2. "It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory." Sin weakened its power, marred its beauty, deranged its functions, prostituted its uses, "set on fire of hell" its passions, reduced it to a state of mere animal, and even bestial existence. To what a state of physical and moral degradation and 'dishonor" has man reduced his body, made to be a glorious "temple" for the habitation of a pure and exalted intelligence! It is indeed fit only for the "worms" of the grave; utterly unfit to answer the high end of its creation. But "it is raised in glory." Glory relates here to *material* perfection: its inherent state. It will be a glorious body, in contrast with the weak, decrepit, dishonored, vile mass that was put into the earth. A higher impress will be upon it. A higher range of power will be given it. New elements of strength and beauty will belong to it. Born to immortality in this new birth, it will be superior to weakness, to fatigue, and to change. It will be always young, "eternal as the years of God," a fit habitation for, and companion of, the glorified spirit. There is no old age in heaven. Immortal life is a life of vigor and maturity, always; with no decadence, no sign of age upon it. The angels who appeared to Mary, and to the disciples after Christ's resurrection, were still *young*, were mistaken for "young men," though they may have

existed thousands of years. On such duration makes no impression.

3. "It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power." The precise, full meaning of this we may not be able to determine. But undoubtedly it indicates a vast increase of power, performance. Even now the body is capable, under proper and severe training, of wonderful endurance, of extraordinary feats of strength, of a truly noble service. Not the least sad result of the fall is our shameful treatment of the body. We pamper it, we animalize it, we brutalize it, we give it every license, we fail to keep it in subjection, we do not discipline and train it for a service worthy of its capacities. And hence it is weak; a thing of vanity, little more than an instrument of lust, and low animal gratification. But "it is raised in power." Its normal condition will be fully restored. Nay, as the glorified spirit, through the life and grace of Christ imparted to it, will amazingly excel its pristine state; so will that same life and grace be reflected in the renewed body of the saint, and cause it to excel Adam's physical being before the fall.

Possessed of such elements as will compose the body then; with a constitution and arrangement fitted to its new and exalted sphere; and put under the favorable discipline of the heavenly life, there will scarcely be a limit to its power of endurance, or its power of performance. Imagination fails us in the attempt to depict it. Its "power" will be a thing of wonder and grandeur. "Strength" is one of the high attributes of Deity. It is also one of the characteristics of angels. They are said to "excel in strength." They are called "mighty angels." A single angel in one night slew 185,000 of the Assyrian army. So loud will be the blast of the Archangel s trumpet in the morning of the resurrection as to be heard all over the earth. And what a Presence was that which "descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone from the door" of the sepulchre "and sat upon it." "His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow; and for fear of him the keepers did shake and became as dead men." Matt. 28: 2–4. Think too of Samson's strength. And of the stripling David's, in slaying a lion with the jaw-bone

of an ass; and slaying Goliath with the force of a small stone hurled from a sling in his hand. In this respect the saints will be the compeers of angels in the future state. They will be qualified physically, as well as spiritually, to take high rank among the hierarchies of heaven. They will be "joint heirs" with Christ in the exercise of princely or regal powers. Under that dispensation, which is to be one of grace only—a completed and glorified system in the person of its Divine Head, and of all the members of his spiritual household—the human body will take rank above all that we can now conceive possible. And Christ will be honored by these perfected and glorified material forms, as well as by "the spirits of the just made perfect."

4. "It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." It is a "body" still—a body as distinct from spirit, soul—a material substance, a corporeal organization. But somehow, by some process or condition, now unknown to us, it will be more ethereal, and subtle, and spiritual, in its structure, and laws, and functions and uses. It will lose its grossness in the grave. It will come forth in the resurrection adapted to a more exalted spiritual state of existence.

There has been much written and preached on this subject which reason and Scripture do not warrant. Straining Paul's words, that "flesh and blood cannot enter the kingdom of heaven," many have dropped the real *body* out of the problem, and converted the eternal state into a mere spiritual existence. Angels, we suppose, have bodies as well as spirits. They always appeared in bodily form in their visits to earth. We cannot indeed conceive of a pure spiritual existence; we believe there is none, save the Deity, and we can conceive of Him only as bodied forth in the God-man. Certainly, Christ is in heaven in the *body*—in the identical body which was crucified, and which lay in the sepulchre, and which rose from the dead, and appeared unto his disciples, and ate bread with them, and was received up into the clouds in their sight. And, "in like manner," they are to see him descend in the last day, and sit on the throne of judgment, and reign in heaven forever and ever. And so literally true will this be that the ever-glorious "scars" which that body received at its immolation—

the prints of the nails in his hands and feet, and the cleft in his side—will all be conspicuous. They will "constitute the INTERCESSION."

The raising and perpetuating the body in its integrity seems essential to the ends of judgment; essential to personal identity and recognition in the future state. The body shares largely in sinning, and also in serving and in suffering, for Christ. And it must needs be that it exist eternally with the spirit, in all its essential attributes, that it may equally partake of the reward or punishment of the future state. For, without it, it would be difficult to establish our identity, or to know, or have intercourse with our friends on the other side of the grave. Lazarus, Abraham, and the rich man, are represented in the parable, as knowing each other. "Many shall come from the east, and from the west, and shall sit down in the kingdom of heaven, with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob." These patriarchs must then be known in heaven. There is something painful in the thought that we are *not* to know our loved ones in the other world. Revelation offers no such violence to our sensibilities. The pure friendships of earth will no doubt be renewed in heaven. Those features, looks, forms, affections, ties, which become so familiar and sacred in our thoughts and associations in this life, will not be rudely suppressed or obliterated by the hand of death. In the resurrection every man will know himself, and recognize his fellowmen, whom he knew here. The murderer will look upon the form he slew. The seducer will meet his victim face to face. The rum-seller will be confronted with the beings whom he brutalized and destroyed by his infamous traffic. The scoffer, the reviler, and the infidel, will have to answer for the many immortal creatures whose religious principles they corrupted, or laughed away. Parents will recognize the children, ruined by their neglect or evil example. The unfaithful pastor will again behold the people whom he led astray, or failed to warn with fidelity.

The doctrine of personal identity and recognition, which renders the raising of the body in its integrity a necessity, wears a terribly dark aspect, as well as a bright one. A mis-

sionary, in the interior of Africa, furnishes a striking illustration of the effect of the doctrine of the resurrection upon the mind of a powerful chief of one of the tribes. No truth of the gospel made the slightest impression on his callous heart until this doctrine was declared. This aroused in the fierce warrior the wildest emotions of fear. He had slain multitudes in battle. His name had long been the terror of his native wilds. He asked the missionary, with eager interest, if all the foes whom he had slain in battle would *live again?* When assured that they would all arise and live forever, he was dismayed. He wept and trembled. A long-slumbering conscience had been aroused.

Finally, the bodies of the saints in the resurrection will be *fashioned after Christ's own glorious body:* "Who shall change our vile body, and fashion it like unto his glorious body." What a pattern! We cannot take in the idea in its fullness and loftiness. There is a height and depth to it that our feeble powers cannot master now. The traditional face of our Lord was something divine. It must have been from his character; for the habitual inward life will and does find expression in the countenance. The soldiers sent to arrest him "fell back as dead men," when they looked upon him. And though a prisoner and friendless in the hands of his enemies, Peter, at one silent glance of his eyes, "went out and wept bitterly." There was a dignity, a divinity, in the face of our Lord, while in the flesh, which human genius has essayed for eighteen centuries to catch and express on canvas, but has failed in the attempt. And yet the *glorified* body of Christ is something grander and more beautiful still. In rising, all that was mortal, weak, imperfect—all that pertained to "the earth earthy" —had passed away, and the human body of the God-man put on attributes more glorious than matter ever before possessed.

The "transfiguration" scene affords us a glimpse of that "glorious body" in which Christ ascended into heaven. The three disciples who were with him on the mount testify that "his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment became white and glistering." The vision which Saul had of the risen Jesus, while on his way to Damascus, was a vision of such glory that

it shone above the noonday sun, and he fell to the earth before the power of it. John also in Patmos had a view of the glorified manhood of Christ, and his description of it is sublime, without a parallel. So great was the splendor of his appearance that he says, "And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead." And yet John leaned on his breast at the last supper! What a change in the meanwhile! *Our* vile bodies are to be "fashioned" after *that* glorious body at Christ's appearing. *Beauty*, as well as "strength," is a divine element, and wherever we behold it, whether in man, in nature, in art, or in moral character, we instinctively do homage to it. It is a fatal gift, often, in a world of temptation and moral corruption. But it is a coveted possession nevertheless, and it sways a fascinating power over man that is well-nigh irresistible. Given this divine element, in every quality, and feature, and member, and form, and expression of the body, and given a moral nature incorruptible, and a society absolutely pure and perfect, and you have the ideal of the resurrection body.

Such will be the body of the saint in the future life. Even here, in spite of the curse, in spite of corruption and depravity marring its every feature, and dragging it down into dust and infamy, there are signs of *nobility* about the human body which indicate its high origin and destiny. Even here, and now, there is no material substance or organization at all comparable to it, in point of delicacy, finish, beauty, and dignity. Manhood is something sublime, almost godlike. And he who vilifies it, mars it, despises it, or outrages it, commits a daring and awful crime, not only against his own nature, but against the divine image in which man was made. In the resurrection, the myriad forms of perfected and glorified Manhood, with Christ himself as the Head of it, will constitute a world of material existences, more beautiful, more wondrous, more glorious, than ever before met the eye of angel, or any other creature. Christ the Redeemer—He who ransomed from the grave all these bodies, and whose grace and Spirit purified and quickened them, and raised them up to immortal life—will receive an immense revenue of praise and glory from this part of his Redemptive work. What lustre, transcending all

description, or conception will shine in it when the Resurrection shall be a completed reality!

The Resurrection of the dead to life eternal is the SECOND PART, or Stage, of the great Redemption-work, which Christ took in hand at the beginning. His mediation on high, his incarnation and death in the world, his intercessory office, and the agency of the Holy Spirit in gathering and training his people, constitute the FIRST Part. The Resurrection will be strictly a *redemptive* act, as really so as Christ's death upon the cross—redemptive in its Author, in its character, in its purpose, and in its effects. It will gather up all past influences and achievements, and secure the harvest ripened by so many dispensations and economies, and stretching from one eternity to another. It will be the consummation of God's greatest work. It will clear up a world of mystery, and heal a world of sorrow, and reunite a world of sundered lives, and bring together separated bodies and souls, and be the fulfillment of a thousand promises. And it will declare "the manifold wisdom" of death's mysterious agency. Thus will it mark another great Epoch in the history of the universe.

What *consolation* have we in this doctrine for believers who mourn for their pious dead! Death makes sad havoc with our earthly hopes and affections. The grave parts us from multitudes who are dear to us, dear often as our own lives. How many, once the delight of our homes, the joy and pride of the circle in which we moved, "with whom we oft took sweet counsel, and walked to the house of God in company," have gone from us never to come back! Some of them have been gone for a long while, and we miss them yet, and sigh over their absence, and keep alive their memories. We are solitary and lonely without them. Their looks, their last words, are still familiar to us. In the dreams of the night we sometimes hold converse with them, and with longings unutterable look forward and upward. Some of these dear ones went from us in the innocency and loveliness of early childhood; some while the bloom of youth and beauty mantled their cheeks; and some in the mellow ripeness of a sanctified old age. We remember how fresh and fair, or how saintly,

they looked as they lay, silent and peaceful, in their coffins; we remember what a pang pierced our heart when we imprinted the last kiss and surrendered them to the grave! O Death! who has not felt thy sting? O Grave! how insatiable have been thy demands upon us!

But down from the excellent glory comes the voice of our Redeemer, and in the ear of every mourner he speaks words of cheer and comfort, saying, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believes in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." "If ye believe that Jesus died and rose again, even them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." That same Divine Voice which now speaks to man in the sweet promises of the Word; that same Voice which to-day pleads with sinners in tender accents to repent and obey the gospel; that same Voice which called Lazarus from the grave, and restored the widow's son of Nain to his weeping mother —that Voice, sounding along the sky, and echoing among the hills and valleys of earth, and searching the dark caverns of the deep and wherever sleeps the dust of man, will give life to all the sleeping dead. Our friends, "who died in the Lord," are not lost—only gone a little before. They shall live again, all of them. The resurrection shall bring them all back to you. And what a day of rejoicing it will be, because of these blessed reunions! Such a coming together, such sweet and hallowed experiences as earth never witnessed. Our loved ones, whom we surrendered to death's cold embrace, will be the very *same* that we parted with on the sullen banks of the river. And yet they will be *changed;* and *so* changed! A thousand-fold more lovely than in life; incorruptible, immortal, divinely beautiful, the equal of angels in strength and dignity; spotless as the robe of Christ, glistening with holiness; —with what rapture shall we embrace them! And now that all danger, and fear, and sin, are past and done with forever; and we have reached a world where there is "no night," no sorrow, no death, where every wound is healed, every capacity is filled, what an eternity of joy and blessedness will begin!

CHAPTER XVII.

THE LAST JUDGMENT AND ITS TRANSACTIONS.

SECTION I.

THE JUDGMENT DAY.

THIS topic is intimately related to the preceding one, both in the order of time, and in the nature of the transactions. Although distinct acts or parts of the great drama of Redemption, they are closely associated and interwoven, and have important and solemn mutual bearings one upon the other.

The doctrine of a general Judgment cannot be said to be discoverable by the light of nature. The heathen at best have only had some obscure notions concerning it. It is one of the peculiar doctrines of revelation. There were intimations of it in the Old Testament. "The Lord cometh to judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth." Ps. 96: 13. "For God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Eccl. 12: 14. In the New Testament, however, the doctrine is revealed with great clearness and fullness, and in a way to impress us most deeply and solemnly with it.

The point at which this judgment is fixed in the Scriptures, is the precise point where it appropriately belongs. We can conceive of no other period in the history of God's universe where it would so well fit in. It is placed between the two eternities. It immediately follows the close of probation, the winding up of Time, and of all earthly things, and the destruction of the world. It is ushered in by the resurrection of all the dead. The long ministry of angels has closed. The new-creating work of the Spirit is finished. The mission of Christ in dying

for sinners, and in pleading with and for them, has come to a perpetual end. Divine Providence, in rescuing and guiding saints from earth to heaven, has been rounded out. The hour has come when "the Devil and his angels," who are "reserved in chains under darkness," are to be judged for the dreadful part they have acted in corrupting and destroying the human race, and doing their utmost to oppose and defeat the cross of Christ. The invisible and mysterious line which separates time from eternity, a changing, probationary state from the unchangeable and the everlasting, has been reached. The angels, likewise, who have long exercised so important and glorious a ministry in behalf of the heirs of salvation, will be entitled to public recognition and will receive their reward in that great and wonderful day.

It is not necessary to rehearse the many scripture passages in which the doctrine of the last Judgment is declared. They are explicit, emphatic, multitudinous, and set it forth in language and imagery of exceeding power. They name the Judge. They announce the principles which will govern him in the adjudication. They describe the scenes, the process, the awards, the sentence, the separation, the joy and the terror, the welcome extended to saints, and the banishment into "outer darkness" of "the devil and his angels," who were cast out of heaven, and all the wicked of mankind who died in their sins. Let a few passages suffice as showing the spirit and principles of the whole inspired testimony: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night." 2 Peter, 3: 10. "Because he hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained." Acts 17: 31. "When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." 2 Thess. 1: 7–10. "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." 1 Thess. 4: 6. These Scriptures not only

announce the fact, but determine several points in relation to the Judgment. And,

1. As to the *person of the Judge.* This is a vital point. In human tribunals very much depends upon the judge—his character, his qualifications, his independence and integrity. And this is pre-eminently true of the judgment of the great day. Think of the momentous issues of that day! All the questions to be reviewed and settled forever: all the persons to be judged: all the sentences to be pronounced, and the awards to be distributed. And all these acts, and decisions, and proceedings of every kind, are to be *final*, irreversible. There can be no appeal from them. They will stand as long as the Throne of the Highest is upheld. If there ever sat on the tribunal of justice a judge in all respects qualified for an office so solemn and responsible, the presiding Judge in that awful day will be that judge.

The person appointed to this high office is *the Lord Jesus Christ.* "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." John 5: 22. He will judge the world "by that man whom he hath ordained." The "one Mediator," the God-man, in his twofold nature; Jesus, the incarnate Word, who suffered and died on the cross to save men; the tender, loving Saviour, who is exhibited in the gospel as weeping over sinners, and pleading with them to repent and accept his offered mercy; the person chosen of God from all eternity to reconcile all moral ideas and forces, and establish a kingdom of everlasting righteousness and peace. Such is the Person who is to judge the quick and the dead, who is invested with supreme authority for this very purpose, and being both God and man, and sustaining such intimate and peculiar relations to the Creator and his creatures, is pre-eminently qualified for the work Man's relationship to Him, and his immense, loving and self-sacrificing services in his behalf, will be elements of amazing interest and significance, and will have a world of weight and application on that occasion. The Judge, supreme in majesty, and in the midst of such surroundings and such an assemblage, will not be a stranger, but an "elder Brother," a judge whose heart has yearned over us

with infinite tenderness, and who has even interposed his own body to save us from condemnation.

2. The Judgment is to be the day of *Christ's peculiar display.* It will be a day of special and unparalleled manifestations in relation to the whole mediatorial scheme, and especially to his character, and sacrifice, and ministry, as the Saviour of the world. The apostle Peter calls it "the day of the Lord." Elsewhere it is called "the day of Jesus Christ." The Sabbath is called "the day of the Lord," because on that day He rose from the dead, and in honor of his finished atonement, consecrated the first day of the week to his special service. The day of the last Judgment is his day, in a higher and grander sense still; for it is to declare the stupendous work of Redemption an accomplished fact: to gather together in one the splendid trophies of that work—elect angels, and redeemed saints, multitudinous in number, and all glorious in character and destiny—and to present the whole vast achievement to the Father, "to the praise of the glory of his grace." We can have no adequate conception of the revelation of that day, as it respects the Lord Jesus Christ. His name, his character, his sufferings, his glorious deeds, his kingdom and rule, will absorb the attention of the universe, and excite wonder, and praise, and homage from all loyal creatures.

The appearance of Christ on that day will be in wonderful contrast with his first appearing to the world. Then he came in lowliness, in poverty, in extreme humiliation. He was despised, reproached, persecuted, forsaken, denied, crucified. But now he will come with "the glory he had with the Father before the world was;" he will "come to be admired in all his saints," and to assert his supreme dignity and glory. No more the babe of Bethlehem; no more a man of sorrows; no more a prisoner before a human judge; no more an expiring victim on the cross; no more dead and buried in the grave. He will sit on the Throne of Heaven, and all power will be in his hands. He will judge and dispose of all creatures at his will. Life and death will be suspended on his word. He will glorify his administration on that day by up-

holding and vindicating the principles which underlie and have governed it from the first. He will glorify his justice in punishing the wicked: his grace in acquitting his people: his omniscience in laying bare the secrets of all hearts: his faithfulness in redeeming his promises and confirming his word, both to the righteous and to the wicked: his power in accomplishing his every purpose, in subduing every enemy to his kingdom; from whose face the heavens and the earth will flee away, and at whose command "a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness," shall appear

3. This terrible day of the Lord will come *as a thief in the night.* This is undoubtedly meant to express its suddenness. Like the flood in Noah's day, it will come at a time when the world is not expecting it; not awake, and watchful, and prepared. As at the time of that overwhelming judgment, men will eat, and drink, and marry, and give in marriage; and scoffers will taunt the righteous with the cry, "Where is the promise of his coming, for since the fathers fell asleep all things remain as they were?" But "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," without warning or premonition, the Day for which all other days were made, will be ushered in. The blast of the archangel's trumpet will suddenly rend the heavens, quake the earth, awake the dead, and marshal the vast population of the world before "the great white throne," and the Judgment will sit.

But is this *all* that is meant by the bold and startling assertion? Possibly not. "The ancient Christians believed that Peter's declaration would be *literally* accomplished. And there is no improbability that the sun, which hid his face at the crucifixion of the Redeemer, will again retire from this stupendous scene; or that the moon and stars will withdraw their shining, and leave the world in deep and melancholy darkness. In this case the morning of the great day will be ushered in, not by the cheerful twilight spreading over the mountains, but by the sudden approach of that intense splendor, surrounded by which the Son of God will descend to judgment. A new and terrible light will appear in mid-heaven, and advancing toward the earth, will diffuse such a morning over all its re-

gions as the universe has never beheld, and will never behold again." And now the trumpet of God will sound, as once it sounded when the same glorious Person descended upon mount Sinai, at the giving of the law, and will call the nations from every corner of creation, and call every inhabitant of earth, from the sea and from the dry land, from the grave, and from the haunts of business, and pleasure, or the place of prayer and meditation—one and all—to stand before the face of the descending Judge.

The precise *extent* of this Judgment, as arbitrating the actual destiny of rational creatures, we are not able to determine with absolute certainty. And yet the general tenor of the Scriptures, the nature and fitness of things, the constitution of the universe, and the general belief of the Church, favor the idea that it will be *universal*. The whole system of Providence, and the entire economy of God's moral government, seem to have been arranged with special reference to this measure. It is undeniably a *Mediatorial* arrangement; and that principle is fundamental in its character, and universal in its application, as I have elsewhere endeavored to show. This judgment therefore must, directly or indirectly, embrace all rational creatures, and all interests, and all events connected with the Mediatorial system. The Mediatorship itself is an infinite Trust, assumed by the Lord Jesus Christ, having immediate reference to the moral government of God, and the moral destiny of his creatures, and involving the principle of mutual obligation. It is therefore reasonable and proper that the responsible Head of all things should, on some suitable occasion, judge every mediatorial subject, and make a judicial final disposition of every question related to Him as Mediator and Administrator, by God's sovereign appointment. That Judgment, of necessity, will enter into the relations, the responsibilities, and the actions of rational beings, as creatures of God, as subjects of law, as constituent parts of the great commonwealth, and as candidates for eternal life. It will also proceed on principles, and have reference to moral ends, of universal interest and application. Hence, whether direct subjects of that judgment or not, all creatures, in all God's dominion, will, either retrospectively, or prospectively, be reached and affected by its decisions.

Holy angels, we know, will then be judged, as well as mankind. For we read, "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him." And the apostle asks: "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" "Do ye not know that saints shall judge the world?" "All the holy angels:" "judge angels," not one particular order, but *all* the inhabitants of the "heavenly places." Fallen angels will be judged. "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, *unto the judgment of the great day.*" John also, in the Apocalypse, declares that the Devil, as the head of the kingdom of evil, will then receive his sentence and punishment. There will be a manifest propriety also in arraigning evil angels at the bar of Jesus Christ. For they originated, and have maintained the kingdom of sin, in opposition to the kingdom of Christ. Rebellion in heaven was resistance to the authority of the one Mediator, and a wicked attempt to subvert it. The Devil seduced man, and he and his angels, ever since the fall of Adam, have done their utmost to ruin the entire race, and to thwart the purposes and the redeeming work of the Saviour. That "the Devil and his angels" feel peculiar, intense, unmixed, inconceivable bitterness and malignity, toward the person and the work of Jesus Christ, admits not of a doubt. And it is not difficult to account for this fact, singular as it may seem at the first blush. For, it was against the person and authority of Jesus Christ that they rose in rebellion at the first. It is inconceivable that "Lucifer, son of the morning," and "his angels," should have measured weapons with Almighty God, the Supreme Majesty. But supreme power was administered by one in *creature* form, and a creature of an inferior order; and hence a wild and terrible outburst of pride and a rebellious spirit. They were humbled and terribly punished by that same Divine-man. It was the spirit of devilish revenge and bitterness which instigated the temptation of Eden, and the temptation of the wilderness; and which animates, and controls, and characterizes the entire kingdom of darkness in every age of the world. The master-spirit of hell *failed* to vanquish the Lord's anointed in his personal assault upon him. But he *did* triumph over the very

race which the Son of God had allied to the divine nature, and thereby offered the highest possible insult to Him, and made a fearful approximation to the accomplishment of a universal ruin. It is fitting, therefore, and every way proper, that the dreadful pride, and hatred, and revengeful spirit of these evil angels should receive a signal condemnation and punishment, through the same person and the same nature, which they have assaulted and striven to destroy, and whose brethren and subjects they have corrupted and tormented.

There is a suggestion here which may account for a moral phenomenon with which we are all familiar, and which it is difficult to explain on any other hypothesis, viz., the intense bitterness and malignity of human wickedness in relation to the person and work of Jesus Christ. This spirit of all depravity is voiced in the cry of his murderers: "Crucify him, crucify him." Voltaire's spirit, embodied in his watchword, "Crush the wretch," is the spirit of a malignity and revenge, deep and bitter as hell. And that is the spirit, not only of the active infidelity of the present time, but the spirit of the carnal unrenewed heart, always and everywhere. And that spirit is the inspiration of *devils*. It is the natural and envenomed expression of a depravity which has *already* "received the just recompense of the reward" at Christ's hands, and is smarting under a terrible infliction of retributive justice. And the more a man comes under the sway of these fallen and already punished spirits, who know there is no mercy in store for them; who chafe continually under the galling of "the everlasting chains" in which they are fettered, the more bitter and violent does he become in his heart and life toward the divine and all-benignant Saviour.

The *human* race, we are abundantly assured, will be judged in the last day. Adam, and all his posterity down to the end of the world—all ranks, and classes, and conditions—all nations, and peoples and tongues—the righteous and the wicked, the friends and the enemies of Christ, the saved and the lost—all, without a single exception, will be personally and deeply interested in the transactions of that day. And there will be much in them that will have *special* application to *mankind*.

The relations of man to the person of the Judge, especially to his human nature, to the death of Christ as a propitiation for his sins, to the revelation of Christ in his Word, to the office-work of his Spirit, to the establishment of his Kingdom on earth, and to the history of his grace, will impart wonderful significance to everything relating to the race which Christ came to redeem. Fallen angels were passed by and left to perish in their sins. "Holy angels" are amazing debtors to Christ, but not such debtors as mankind are. For them specially Christ "tasted death." To them specially "grace, mercy and peace have been multiplied." For their salvation specially, extraordinary revelations and dispensations have been made, and vast agencies and forces been put in requisition. So that the judgment passed upon mankind will be Christ's own expression of the *value* Heaven puts upon his redeeming work—upon the sacrifice of Calvary, and upon the stupendous system of grace which grew out of it. It will be an expression also of the measure of *guilt*, on the part of those who rejected his salvation and perished miserably in their sins, in spite of his merciful interposition to save them. The formal, public, solemn decisions of the last Judgment, made by the Lord Jesus Christ, will be a testimony in relation to the character and desert of sin, the nature, the integrity, and the force of God's moral government, and the tremendous consequences of transgression, and especially of impenitent sin under the dispensation of the Cross, that will be most decisive and important in itself, and that cannot fail to have an extraordinary and controlling effect on the whole future of the universe.

This grand judicial proceeding has been appointed of God, and will be so conducted as to make it a signal *vindication* of himself in the eyes of all intelligent creatures. The problem of Moral Evil will then, for the first time, receive solution. God's reasons for permitting sin to invade and ravage his kingdom will then appear, and the means he has taken to limit, and overrule and punish it, and the singular wisdom and efficacy of those means will be clearly brought to light. The *providential* reign of Christ will be reviewed, in its application to every man's life and character; and that review will strip every sinner of all excuse for sinning, and all excuse for

perishing in his sins under a dispensation of grace. And so, "amid the thunders and lightnings of judicial terror, mingled with the sweet benignity of redeeming love," the Supreme Judge will re-announce his authoritative law.

The *space* allotted to this august transaction will not of course be a *natural day*. Time will then be no more, and duration will not then be measured as now. It may, and doubtless will, extend over a long period. The nature and importance of the occasion; the immense preparations made for it; the prominence given to it in the Scriptures; the infinite number to be judged; and the extent and character of the questions and interests to be adjusted, plainly indicate and warrant the idea, that the process and solemnity of the judgment will be greatly prolonged, and made to pass in solemn review before the eyes of all rational creatures with peculiar and abiding impressiveness. Certain it is, that the proceeding will be sufficiently extended to judge each and every one constituting the vast assemblage gathered at the judgment-seat of Christ. No one will be passed by. Every eye shall meet the glance of the awful Judge, and be singled out from the countless throng, and made to stand in his naked individuality at the bar of divine Justice. No sea, no mountain, no refuge of any kind, no covering, no concealment, will be available in that hour. All these will have passed away forever, and every man will stand directly confronted with his Judge, confronted with his own entire life, confronted with the law, both of eternal righteousness, and of grace, which he has wickedly trampled under feet, or penitently obeyed, and with his inevitable destiny under the law of righteous Retribution. The tongues which here revile, and curse, and blaspheme the name of Jesus, will be silent there. The preachers who have here denied the supreme Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, and reduced him to the level of a mere creature, will look on that scene with dumb amazement. The ministers, sworn in ordination vows to preach "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," who have come to deny "the faith once delivered to the saints," and to traduce the evangelical system of doctrine, and to substitute morality, manhood, sentiment, culture, in the place of the es-

sential doctrines of a justifying righteousness through faith in Christ and the new-creating power of the Spirit of God, and to side with latitudinarians, and scoffers, and infidels, in the attempt to break down the law of eternal righteousness in men's minds, and so to sweep away the last barrier of virtue—such ministers will discover their mistake in that day. And all their courage, and idle boasts, with which they now court a smile and applause, will have vanished. Speechless, covered with shame, in the presence of "the great white throne," surrounded by the men and the women whom they have beguiled from the true faith, now bitterly denouncing them, they will stand forth abashed and cowering to hear their doom. And it will be a doom more bitter and dreadful even than the doom inflicted on the murderers of our Lord; for "they knew not what they did," and the Sufferer's own dying prayer went up to heaven in their behalf. But an *unfaithful* minister's doom! An *apostate* minister's doom! A *deceitful* minister's doom! Can there be any excuse, any mercy, for such? Will there be found in all the books of heaven, which are there to be opened, one prayer for the forgiveness of Judas? or of any disciple who has betrayed the Master? Judas' name has come down the ages, and will travel down the cycles of eternity, as the synonym of the lowest, deepest, most hellish type of depravity, because he BETRAYED HIS LORD AND MASTER—betrayed him with deliberate purpose and forethought; and not from malice, but for a "price!" betrayed him with a deceitful "kiss!" and not as the outcome of an honest, manly, intelligent conviction that he was an impostor. DANTE had a just conception of the unparalleled guilt and infamy of the character represented by Judas, and he has given a most vivid expression of it in his "Divine Comedy." He locates him in the lowest Division of the lowest Circle. What a horrible picture does he draw, with Lucifer as tormentor, of the sufferings of Judas, Brutus and Cassius, whom he bites, and claws, and strips of their flesh!

> "That soul up there which has the greatest pain,"
> The Master said, "is Judas Iscariot;
> With head inside, he plies his legs without."
>
> *Inferno*, Canto xxxiv.

The actual work of the Judgment has *already* begun. It

began in heaven nearly six thousand years ago, when "the Devil and his angels" were arraigned and punished by this same Divine Judge; so far forth at least as to expel them from heavenly places, and confine them to earth, and bind them over in chains under darkness unto the general judgment. The angels which kept their first estate, have also been judged, to the extent of being rewarded for their fidelity and services in that memorable conflict, and have been honored with a responsible and blessed ministry in behalf of those who are to be heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ Jesus to the inheritance everlasting. Families, communities, nations, and churches, like "the seven churches of Asia," have likewise been judged and rewarded, according as they have done good or evil. And so with multitudes of individuals. Like Belshazzar, they have already been "weighed in the balances and found wanting;" and a divine hand has traced their doom, just as certainly, and as visibly, as his doom was traced by a mysterious hand upon the walls of his palace. *Every* man is judged at death. The body is laid away in the grave, but "the soul returns to God who gave it," and his eternal state is then as really and unalterably fixed as it will be at and after the last Judgment.

And this process will continue to go forward until the appointed day THE GREAT DAY of doom—shall have come, when all past judicial acts will be brought to the knowledge of the universe, and be explained and confirmed in the most solemn and impressive manner by the enthroned Lamb of God, and the judicial part of his Mediatorship will be completed.

The whole period of this stupendous judicial transaction will be one of such wonder, and power, and interest, and anxiety, and grandeur—so abasing to the creature, and so exalting to the Creator—so belittling man's best endeavors and merits, and mantling the character and the cross of Christ with a dignity and a glory so absolutely divine and infinite—that, as a revelation, as a consummation, as issuing consequences so momentous, it will stand out and forth to the view of the universe as articulating the results of Time, and the destinies of Eternity.

"That day, that awful day, the last
Result and sum of all the Past."

The judgment will proceed. Mankind, as more directly involved in the Redemptive scheme, will, first of all, be arraigned. This is evident from the fact that the saints are to "judge angels." They must themselves of course be first acquitted. The books will be opened, containing all the matter of evidence needed for the occasion. The book of nature will be laid open to inspection, and will exhibit the laws which God has written on the physical universe, and in the hearts of his rational creatures, leaving "without excuse" such as have lived and died without the knowledge of God. The book of providence will be unsealed, and its amazing system of events and agencies, evolving God's plan of government, his law, the rewards of obedience, and the fruit of transgression, will be set in order before every mind. The book of memory, and the book of conscience, and "the great book of God's remembrance," will each and all be produced; and each man will be judged according to what is found written therein. And above all the book of Christ's redeeming love will shed light on the business of that day. It will reveal the law of grace, the history of the cross, the dark deeds of human wickedness in connection with it, and the thrilling scenes of redemptive mercy.

The record of each individual case will be full and complete. Nothing whatsoever will be wanting. The life and character of every man, inner and outer, secret and public, will be reproduced, when he shall stand before the judgment-seat of Christ to hear his doom. Each and every individual in all that vast assembly will come under the personal scrutiny of the Judge, with whom he will be confronted face to face, and who will bring out and apply the law of rectitude, as it existed in the mind of God from all eternity, and has been revealed, although never perfectly, in his works, and providential dispensations. Proceeding on the basis of eternal and absolute righteousness, bringing into view the great principles of mediation and atonement, and giving them all proper weight and scope in defining ultimated character, and shaping eternal destiny, every truly righteous soul will be *acquitted*, and every wicked soul will be *condemned*—and acquitted in the one case,

and condemned in the other, on principles, and for reasons so obviously and signally just, and good, and necessary, as to constitute a glorious vindication of the Divine character and kingdom, and a grateful, powerful pledge of eternal security and happiness to all the loyal sons of God. Instead of lowering the demands of God's justice, and weakening the force of law, the Cross of a suffering and atoning Saviour will be seen to be an eternal monument of Righteousness, as well as of Mercy,

"Towering o'er the wrecks of Time."

There is one feature of the Judgment most remarkable, the precise character of which we cannot determine. "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" 1 Cor. 6: 3. These significant words are susceptible of either of two interpretations. Either the saints, as Christ's royal seed, will be invested with power to try and punish the wicked angels, who seduced them into sin, and continually harassed them, and contended with Christ and his Church: or they will receive their fulfillment in the intimacy of the relations existing between Christ and the members of his mystical body—the judgment and triumph of Jesus Christ being in effect the judgment and triumph of his people. Whichever view be true, it is manifest that the saints, who are the brethren of and "joint heirs" with Christ, will fill the highest place of honor in the scene of the final day. The Devil, the master-spirit of evil, and the head of the Kingdom of darkness, will stand at the bar of the saints and be judged. Paul, in Romans, declares: "And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." And now shall that promise be fulfilled. Satan deceivingly told our first parents, when he tempted them into sin, that they "should be as gods." "But little did he think that they should indeed be so far as gods as to be assessors with God to judge him. Much less did he think that one of that nature which he then tempted —one of the posterity of those very persons whom he tempted and triumphed over in Eden—should actually be united to God; that as God he should judge the world; and that he himself would at last stand, trembling and speechless, before his judgment-seat. But thus the Devil and all his angels, who have opposed Christ and his Kingdom, shall now at last stand

in utter amazement and horror before Christ and his Church, who shall appear to condemn them."

Such being the character, the relations, the subjects, and the ends of the last Judgment, it will be a fitting close to the Earthly Kingdom, and a fitting introduction to the Everlasting.

Seeing, then, that all these things shall come to pass, "what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness; looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God?" 2 Peter 3: 11, 12. Was there ever a more legitimate or fitting inference deduced from a scripture doctrine? Was there ever one of greater importance or solemnity pressed home upon the consideration of man? This great doctrine of the final Judgment has been revealed to the world for *practical* effect—to influence and control the probationary life of man. Not to gratify curiosity, not for purposes of speculation, has God planted "the great white throne," and Jesus Christ, in the character and office of a righteous final Judge, right before us, over against every man's death and eternity. The judgment is made to loom up to view, day by day, as we measure off the thread of mortal life; to confront us with its searching questions, its full revelations, its terrible scenes, its momentous issues, turn whichever way we will, and in every act and thought of our being. It is meant to shape, and grade, and determine, every purpose, every interest, our entire character and manner of life; and he, and he alone, is a prudent, a wise man, who keeps his eye fixed steadily on that coming tremendous reality.

How deeply, how habitually concerned, ought every soul of us to be in anticipation of the judgment day of Jesus Christ. There we must stand in our lot, in our individual, conscious, responsible self, and meet the tremendous issues of that day. And it will be a revealing, a searching, an awful day. All previous judgments, and the day of death, will be nothing in comparison. When those flaming eyes shall single us out from the great crowd, and we shall be led up to the bar, and wait to hear the words which are to seal our destiny and fix us in bliss or woe forever, what intense anxiety and solemnity will possess

and overwhelm us. Of what infinite value *then* will appear the righteousness of Christ—one smile from His divine face, one word of approval from His lips! How terrible in that light will impenitent sin appear! An angry look, a condemning word, O who can stand before them!

And remember that Judgment will take on its character from the *Cross*. It will be a judgment based on mediation; on the atonement made by Christ himself to save you; on the revelation of mercy and grace freely offered you in Christ, and pressed upon your acceptance. You will not be judged by "the light of nature;" by the principles of "natural religion;" nor for "Adam's sin;" nor on the ground that "God's decrees" stood in the way of your salvation. If any one thing shall be clearly seen, and definitely determined in that awful day, it will be the fact that no sinner under the gospel need to have died. That "Christ tasted death for every man." That the offer of pardon was sincerely made to all, and made on a solid foundation. And that the only reason why any man failed of the grace of God and died in impenitence, was simply and only because he refused to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and hardened his heart in iniquity. None of the miserable excuses, and subterfuges, and lying deceits, which sinners so commonly practice upon themselves in this life, will be offered there. And if they were offered, they would not avail but would be thrown back upon them in righteous indignation. There will not be the shadow of a "chance," for any man, before that tribunal, no matter what his life, his character, his profession, or his expectation, who is not found *in Christ* and clothed with his righteousness; whose soul is not in harmony with his moral kingdom; whose aims, whose hopes, whose aspirations, whose interests, are outside of that circle in which Christ is the power and the glory, and will be the power and the glory everlastingly.

"That day of wrath, that dreadful day!
When heaven and earth shall pass away,
What power shall be the sinner's stay?
How shall he meet that dreadful day?"
Dies Iræ.

SECTION II.

THE FINAL SENTENCES.

THERE are three distinct acts in the Judgment scene, viz.: the process of the trial, resulting in the acquittal or condemnation of each and every subject of God's moral government; the sentence passed by the Judge respectively upon the righteous and the wicked; and the final act of separation. The first of these we have already considered. The second now claims attention in the natural order of things.

Let us start, if possible, with a clear conception of the solemn transaction. Spread out before your mind, as best you can, the scenes of the Judgment day. The period of probation has ended. Time is no more. The dying hour of the world has come. The trump of God has sounded. The dead are risen. Christ, the Judge, has descended, in awful pomp and glory, to determine and bestow the awards of eternity. The universe of moral beings is assembled at his bar. The books are opened, and the records of heaven and of earth, give in their testimony. One saint after another has been put on trial and acquitted, and ranged to the Right of the Judge. All the fallen angels, with the Devil at their head, and every unforgiven sinner of the human family, will have been convicted and compelled to take the place assigned them to the Left of the Judge.

This solemn, heart-searching, character-revealing process has been going forward for an immense period of duration; and the fixed attention of the universe has been concentrated upon it. But now the process is finished. Every soul has been judged, and the character and destiny of all are unalterably fixed. Every holy angel, and every saint, in all that throng, lifts up his head in triumph and rejoices. While the last evil angel and the last impenitent man have been forced to come out into the light of that burning Throne, and stand, self-convicted, speechless and trembling, in the presence of Omniscient Justice. And now—is it unreasonable to suppose it?—there will be a solemn *pause* in the proceedings. The die is cast. Every character has been made manifest. Every soul knows his destiny. On the "Right," there are smiles, and re-

joicings, and congratulations among the elect angels and saints. But on the "Left"—oh, who shall paint to us and for us the scene?—that hideous array of moral ugliness, and convicted guilt, and trembling terror, and overwhelming despair?

And now will the Judge rise up in the majesty of his office, more terrible in his brightness than the light of a thousand suns, and turning to the innumerable company on his Right hand, his face beaming with Divine benignity, and his words breathing the spirit of infinite love, he will pronounce the sentence of acquittal and of life everlasting: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from before the foundation of the world." Matt. 25: 34. And then, turning to the crowd of terror-stricken souls on his Left, He will pass sentence of eternal banishment and death, in words of fearful power: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Matt. 25: 41.

The Sentence, or decree, is the most important and solemn part in judicial proceedings. The evidence having been elicited by the formal and often tedious process of trial, and the fact of the guilt or innocence of the accused thereby established in the mind of the court, the presiding Judge, as the expounder and guardian of the Law, makes an application of its principles to the case in hand, and rules an acquittal of the charge and a release, or condemns and holds the guilty party to the punishment affixed to the crime proven. The climax of the scene is reached when the guilty and condemned man stands up before the bar of the court to receive his sentence. In that act the essential principles of justice between man and man are stated, and reaffirmed and enforced. There is a moral impression made by such a scene which is scarcely equaled in any other human proceedings. Not unfrequently the tremulous voice of the judge, the hushed manner of the court-room, and the tearful eyes of the spectators, bear testimony to its power for good.

The sentence of acquittal upon the righteous, and of condemnation upon the wicked, in the judgment day, by the Lord Jesus Christ, will gather to a point all the interest and solemnity of that tremendous scene; and so will make a moral im-

pression on the universe which will be deep and lasting. That supreme judicial act will embody and apply the essential principles of moral government, as they exist in the Eternal Mind, and have been unfolded in his providence; and it will give a new and intensely affecting expression to them. There will be gathered up, in that one act of mediatorial sovereignty, the light and warning and force of all past judicial decisions and inflictions; God's expressed approbation of all previous acts of virtue and of all holy exercises, and his hatred and condemnation of all past iniquity. It will put upon sin the brand of eternal infamy, and disclose to all creatures the immeasurable depth of its ruin. It will gather around obedience the charm and attraction of every grace.

The acquittal of the saints, and their eternal reward, on that august occasion, not for any goodness of their own, either inherent, or acquired, or performed, but on the sole ground of Christ's righteousness, "imparted to them and received by faith," will furnish proof, a public demonstration, of the value of his services and obedience unto death, exceedingly grand and impressive. The grace that first contrived the amazing plan; the grace that provided an all-sufficient expiation for the sins of the world; the grace that raised them from the very abyss of hell to the heights of celestial glory; the grace that renewed in their souls the lost image of God, and conferred upon them the gift of eternal life, will receive most precious confirmation and illustration in that hour. The infinite love of the Father, the richness and fullness of the dispensation of the Cross, and the genuineness and value of Christian faith and service, as brought out in the history of the Church, will be revealed afresh and with signal lustre, in that benignant welcome and benediction: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from before the foundation of the world." The magnitude of the blessing realized, in that day, by the whole redeemed family, and the wonderful way in which it will have been secured and bestowed, will greatly enlarge the views of all intelligences, of the unsearchable riches of God's love and grace in Jesus Christ.

In contrast with this sentence of acquittal and blessed-

ness, will be that other sentence of final separation and banishment, which the great Judge will pronounce in that day: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." There will be no weakness, no shrinking, no hesitancy, no false pity or tenderness in the Divine Judge in that supreme hour. If such a thing *were* possible, and *were* demonstrated, then and there, the Throne of the Universe would totter, Eternal Justice would quake, angels and saints would weep, and the crowd on the Left would exchange cries of terror for shouts of victory. It will be the supreme hour in the history of God's government, and in the history of his intelligent creatures—an hour in the which will be concentrated the Future of God's kingdom, and the Future of his creatures in all the coming eternity. Will the Impersonation of Divine Justice and Law be *firm* in that crisis of destiny? Will the Divine-man, whom God hath "ordained" to this very work, fail or disappoint the Father? Weaken, in view of the tremendous consequences of the issue? Modify the just demands of righteous government, or compromise with proven guilt? Such questions, even at this distance in time, are freighted with a world of interest and meaning. How will they appear *then?*

Of all the vain hopes which the darkened mind of man ever cherished, that which is built on the Divine clemency toward impenitent and convicted sin in the day of judgment, is the weakest, and the most irrational. The Justice which demanded and would be satisfied with nothing short of the highest penalty, in the person of the eternal Son of God, when he put himself in the sinner's place under the broken law; the Justice which executed such signal vengeance on rebellious angels, and bound them over to the judgment in chains of hopeless darkness; the Justice which swept away the old world with the besom of destruction, and consumed with fire the cities of the plain, and has looked on through all the ages of suffering as providence has rolled on its purposes—has nerve enough, and firmness enough, and principle enough, and determination and consistency enough, when the *final* decisive hour has come, by one majestic, tremendous stroke of Omnipotent energy, to cut off from life, and hand over to death

"everlasting," every "cursed" spirit of angelic depravity, and every soul of man steeped in impenitent sin.

"*Depart.*" They are to flee hence—get away out of the sight and minds of the good. As Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and went with a murderer's brand on his forehead, so these condemned spirits are to be driven forth into "outer darkness," into some remote and solitary region, where they are to dwell forever in *isolation* from the rest of the universe.

"From *me.*" From Christ, the only source of blessing and power—from Christ, the centre of all attraction, the only potentate, "who only dwelleth in light, who only hath immortality." "Ye *cursed.*" Cursed of God, cursed of all holy beings, cursed by the upbraidings of their own guilty consciences.

Awful words to fall from such lips, on such an occasion. Guilt is proven. Hope there is none. On them the wrath of God abideth evermore.—"Into everlasting *fire.*" It may be *literal* "fire:" we know not. We cannot assert to the contrary. We read of "a lake which burneth with fire and brimstone." The hollow of our earth is said to be a mass of burning fluid. And so of other worlds. God has ways and means sufficient to make good his words, even in a literal sense. But "fire" is probably used here as expressive of the intensity of the suffering inflicted. The mental and moral sufferings of a man may infinitely exceed any possible physical infliction. You have only to conceive of a soul forsaken of God and of hope; excluded from heaven and all intercourse with the morally good; convicted of worthlessness and guilt; forever bound to his own depravities, and unable to get away from the reproaches of an upbraiding conscience; confined to the society of the abandoned and accursed; and given over to raging lusts and evil passions, which shall never more find gratification,—you have only to conceive this in order to conceive a "hell" that will answer to the description of inspiration. No direct infliction of punishment on God's part is necessary. It is only necessary to withhold all grace, all restraint, all holy association, all social elements of a virtuous character, and abandon the creature to the dominion of his chosen and evil ways.

"*Everlasting* fire" There are those who seek to restrict the meaning of this term, and its equivalent terms, "eternal," "forever," "everlasting destruction," which so frequently occur in the Scriptures. Has language, then, no fixed meaning? Does Christ mean to deceive the world, when he puts such words into his own mouth on so grave an occasion? Is the blessing perpetual, eternal, upon the righteous—the blessedness stored up for them from the foundation of the world—while the sentence upon the wicked is meant to be only temporary, only for a season? Is there a sane man on earth who is willing to *run the risk* of such a chance, such a ground of possible escape in the day of doom "and perdition of ungodly men"? When men, for a purpose, can fritter away the meaning of such words as "forever," "eternal," "everlasting," they are capable of any moral perversion—of falsifying the plainest and most positive testimony of God himself. But "*destruction*" —"EVERLASTING DESTRUCTION!" it defies perversion. No ingenuity, no power of "the higher criticism," can restrict or pervert the meaning. "For their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched." Isa. 66: 24.

"Prepared for the *devil and his angels*." There is intense significance in this phrase. It is not injected or dragged in for scenic effect. It gives vivid and forcible expression to a most solemn and momentous truth connected with the scene of the judgment. It establishes the fact that, in point of moral character, moral destiny, and future punishment, fallen angels and unforgiven men are *one*. They are essentially *alike*, and are essentially and forever *linked* together. Just as all holy angels and redeemed saints are one in character, and one in destiny, in the kingdom of the Father. It might seem at first that devils and sinning men were unequally yoked together; for terrible was the guilt of sinning angels, contemplated in the light of the punishment instantly inflicted upon them. Terrible was the sin of the "Devil" in deceiving and seducing our first parents. And what moral ruin, and misery, and death, have he and "his angels" wrought in this world during six thousand years! Is there a limit to their guilt? As easily measure the waters of the ocean in the hollow of your hand, or weigh the mountains in a balance, as to do it. Is there any

punishment too severe to mete out to such offenders—such disturbers of the public peace—such malignant enemies of God and man? Can the mind of a sane man conceive that such sinners will have another "chance"? that Heaven will, at some period in the future, relent in view of their suffering and cut it short? That by some unknown process they will yet work their way up into purity and life?

And *why not,* if this is affirmed of *human* sinners? They are not essentially unlike in character, or the unerring and impartial Judge would not classify and link them together in the judgment and awards of the eternal state.

There is, indeed, an element in human depravity which is wanting in all other depravities known to us. Christ himself states it: "If I had not come and spoken unto them they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin." John 15: 22. Devils have not sinned against the revelations of the Cross. Devils have not resisted dying love. Devils have not grieved the Spirit of God. Devils have not put themselves abreast of the mighty tide of redeeming influences and forces, and resisted it all with a hard and impenitent heart, as multitudes of sinful men have done. And hence, there will be a nearer approach to equality in character, and guilt, and moral desert, between the two classes of convicted transgressors in judgment, than is at first apparent. Nay, it is not at all improbable that the blackest, the most depraved, the most unutterably vile characters that shall be disclosed and convicted in the last Judgment, will come from the ranks of humanity. Surely human history has produced moral monsters equal to anything that the annals of guilt can furnish, or the imagination is able to paint.

It is not a little surprising that "the devil and his angels" are left to relentless fate, while all the sympathies of our sentimentalists are expended upon their accomplices in sin and companions in perdition. I never heard the idea advanced that their "everlasting chains" might one day be knocked off, and the gate of heaven be opened to Lucifer and the angel hosts whom he led into rebellion. And why not? Why exclude lost angels from the benefits of a possible "chance" in the future? There is as much reason and scripture in support

of the speculation, in its application to sinning angels, as to sinning men. The Judge of all has linked them together in one and the same destiny. Who shall dare to separate what God has joined together? Who shall dare to pass those prison gates of doom and darkness and proclaim deliverance to a part of the judicially "cursed" spirits, and leave the rest in despair and hopeless torment? If the Fatherhood of God forbids the idea of endless punishment for one race of his erring children, how is it that he suffers the infliction upon another race no more deserving of it? Or is God a partial God, acting after the manner of men, governing his great kingdom by caprice or arbitrary rules, rather than by eternally just, and consistent, and universal principles? Will he, somewhere in the future, of his own will, be moved to pardon and release from the common prison of convicted moral felons, whither he banished them in the judgment day, sinners of mankind, who once had the offer of life and failed to embrace it, and who, in his sight, it may be, are a hundred-fold more guilty than the angels whom he cast out of heaven in the day of revolt, and leave the latter to clank their chains, and make their dungeon-walls to resound with wailing and blasphemy? And yet this is in the line of our "improved theology." This is "liberal" Christianity. This is the "progress" of thought in the Church. This is the considerate "tender-heartedness" of a class of modern preachers who assert that God would be a "moral monster" if he should punish any part of mankind with "everlasting destruction," for their incorrigible wickedness.

The weight, and intensity, and bitterness of the final Judgment and Sentence of long-delayed and insulted, but now everywhere-triumphant, Justice, cannot be portrayed or conceived. That experience can be understood only by those who shall realize it. The power of a guilty conscience gives some intimation of it now. The Scriptures use the most intense language and striking symbols to convey to us an impression of it. Yet the mind cannot take in the full force of that sovereign act of Divine Retribution. Based on the principles of strict and impartial justice; announced by One whose humanity allies him with the creature, and who himself has

tasted death for man; it being also the natural fruit and wages of sin in the impenitent soul, and being brought home to the convictions of the guilty by almighty energy, it will be like "seven thunders" uttering their voices. It will startle and thrill the universe. "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Oh appalling moment! Oh what fearful words to burst, in righteous anger, from lips which "spake, as never man spake," words of tender love and pity! How that dread sentence will peal on the ear of every living creature, and roll down the sky of every world! There is eternity in the sentence.

The Sentence of eternal life upon the righteous, and of eternal death upon the wicked, will determine, for all duration, and for all moral creatures in all worlds, whose is the supreme WILL, and what is the supreme LAW of the Kingdom of God. As the decisions of our higher courts, especially in important cases, establish the rules and principles of human jurisprudence, which serve as precedents or authorities in the inferior courts, so will the decisions of the Supreme Tribunal, on that ever-memorable occasion, be the authority, and will embody and articulate the principles which shall rule God's "Everlasting Kingdom." They will have *application* wheresoever there are moral and accountable beings to be influenced by law, and will constitute, so to speak, a moral lighthouse, towering on the shore of a boundless Future, flinging out its peerless light over the expanse of waters. As new worlds shall be created and peopled with rational intelligences; or some of the millions of stars, now in their formative period, shall be finished and peopled with other orders of beings—and who is weak enough to suppose that the Creator has exhausted his purpose and his power?—it is reasonable to believe that the transactions of the Judgment scene—being prospective as well as retrospective in character—will be declared to them as the settled and fixed law of moral conduct. And whatsoever changes may yet occur in the peopled realms of the universe, and whether rebellion shall be effectually arrested and put down, and confined to its circumscribed limits, as I believe it will be, or be suffered to extend its ravages still further, we

may safely conclude that the decisions of that eventful day will never be reversed, never be modified, and that the principles which rule them will be strictly upheld and maintained forever inviolate.

SECTION III.

THE SEPARATION OF THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED.

One feature of the last Judgment, as the scene is pictured by the pen of inspiration, is dramatic in the extreme. And yet it is a natural presentation, and is not made for scenic effect. It is a *moral* exhibition, and it presents visibly to the eye of the mind a moral fact of universal interest, and of infinite moment. There are two immense groups or gatherings there. But they are distinct and separate. They do not intermingle or have intercourse, one with the other. There are no ties, or relations, or interests binding them together, although they are all the creatures of God, destined to exist forever. They are both there to be judged, and have, both alike, gone through with the process of trial, and then have divided off, and are, visibly and morally and in the matter of destiny, separated as widely asunder as if the "great gulf" already yawned between them.

On the "Right" of the Judge, is ranged one of these immense groups, and on the "Left" the other; and between the two is planted the Throne of Judgment. That "great white throne" divides, parts asunder, eternally separates, the two characters, the two classes, which the process of the trial has disclosed and fixed forever. And the measure of that Throne, and all it represents, is the measure of the moral distance there really is in the ultimated characters and destinies of the Righteous and the Wicked: the "blessed" portion of God's creation, and the "cursed" portion, as determined in the decisions of the inquisition just made, and the final sentences just pronounced. That Throne not only visibly and morally separates

Good and Evil, as the result of this grand judicial finding, on that great public occasion, but it will continue to separate them "for ever and ever." The principles of moral good and evil, the creatures of holiness and of sin, the dwellers "in heavenly places," and in the place "prepared for the devil and his angels," can never again come together, or intermingle, while the Throne of God stands. That must first decay or be broken down. The eternal Judge means to teach the world, and does impressively teach it, by this presentation of the judgment scene, that all the power and perfections of the Godhead stand pledged to *perpetuate* the distinctions, the discriminations, and the awards of the judgment day. That Everlasting Throne is really "THE GREAT GULF FIXED," which no creature can ever pass.

Not only will this final, visible, world-wide Separation be *perpetual*—perpetual alike in the decree of God, and in the nature of things—but it will be a measure of immense importance in its bearings upon the future of the universe. Until the Judgment, no actual separation will have been made between the Kingdom of Holiness and the Kingdom of Sin. Infinite Wisdom, for reasons beyond the ken of our knowledge, now suffers moral good and evil to exist together in the same world, in the same circle of being, in the same person, under one and the same dispensation. And not only to exist in immediate actual contact, but to exist as radical *antagonistic* forces, in active constant conflict one with the other. This has been true ever since sin invaded the Kingdom of God. And the Scriptures assure us that it will continue thus until the last Judgment. But *there* the conflict is to cease. There the antagonistic elements and forces are to be separated. There the warring powers are to lay down their arms, not by virtue of a reconciliation and a coming together in harmony; but by the interposition of Omnipotent Power and Justice separating the parties, and separating all the elements which entered into the strife; and henceforth placing between them barriers of distance, and condition, and destiny, which can never be broken down or scaled.

Now, however, these metes and bounds are not unalterably fixed—they are not even determined. The natural eye

fails to apprehend what is clear to the Divine Mind; and even our moral consciousness takes in but a feeble impression of the real state of the case. We cannot run the dividing line between good and evil. We dare not pass unqualified judgment. We dare not morally judge any man, except in part and conditionally; and not even that much, except we get light from God's Word. This matter of moral judging is solemn and responsible business, and well may the best and wisest man on earth shrink from exercising it; especially when our judgment relates to a man's relations to God and to eternity. To "his own Master he standeth or falleth." Besides, we are not morally qualified to judge others, for we ourselves are tainted with sin. The human mind is everywhere darkened by reason of it. We live in contact with it every day and hour of life. We come into the shadow of it. We breathe the atmosphere of it. We feel the power of it—its misleading, corrupting, perverting influence, constantly. And, honest in purpose as we may be, and much as we may strive to free ourselves from all biasing influences, and judge impartial, righteous judgment, it is yet morally impossible, so long as we stay in this sinful world. Light and darkness mingle and commingle all around us, and in our own hearts: truth and error contend on the same field. All the great moral forces of the world are warring against each other. Interests are opposed to interests; motives clash with motives; passions strive with passions; time is set over against eternity; the things which are seen with the things which are unseen. Conscience condemns, and the inclinations of the soul, and the appetites of the body, approve and clamor. Man is at perpetual war with himself, and at war with the whole present order of things. And he cannot help himself. He cannot find nook or corner in all this world where he can lay off his armor and find rest and peace; feel that he is secure; escape from or get beyond the presence and influence of sin.

This is the experience of every man born into the world. And it follows him down to the grave. And it is not so by accident or chance, but by the ordination of God. It is in accordance with the present dispensation of things, which is one of mixed good and evil; one of moral conflict, which is to con-

tinue until the close of time, and ultimate its moral results in the judgment day. All the purposes of God, all the arrangements of providence, all the tendencies of the life that now is, contemplate and move toward this great final SEPARATION. at the entrance of the eternal state.

That Separation is sure to come. It is as sure as that the principles of justice and holiness will ultimately prevail in God's Kingdom; as sure as that Omnipotent Virtue will overcome creature depravity. And, when the separation shall come, it will be *final*—for all duration. It will be broad as God's perfections, radical as the principle of moral virtue, and perpetual as the nature and government of God. An Almighty Hand will trace the broad line of Separation—a line never to be obliterated, or deflected—and a line that will extend through everlasting ages. And on one side of that line will be the kingdom of righteousness and peace, and on the other the kingdom of iniquity and moral anarchy.

And *now* will begin a new and blessed era, under the reign of the Prince of Peace. Now will sound the "trump of Jubilee," and the ransomed of the Lord shall come to Mount Zion with rejoicing. No more will be heard the din and strife of the conflict. No more will the mind be darkened by sin, or the heart made sad by it, or the life be turned from its high purpose. Holy angels will no longer be required to minister to the weak and erring children of the apostasy. Evil spirits will no longer be allowed to torment God's children; nor wicked men to oppose and revile God's anointed Son. "There shall be none to molest or make afraid, in all God's holy mountain."

We can scarcely picture to ourselves such a state of moral peace and blessedness The law of truth, and love, and holiness, triumphant within; the soul absolutely pure from all defilement; superior to all weakness, and free from every element of fear. and suffering, and evil, and surrounded by beings just as holy, and good, and happy. With nothing in the outward condition or surroundings, to suggest an evil or an unhappy thought; conscious of immortality, and looking forward only to higher planes of living, and broader fields of joyous experience. What a destiny will that be! But while we cannot conceive of it, it will be matter of actual realization at the judg-

ment day, and forever beyond. The long and painful dispensation of time will have wrought out, as God meant it should, sublime and far-reaching results in eternity. The principles of moral virtue, antagonized so fiercely in this world, by such terrible forces of depravity, for thousands of years, shall come forth from the strife everywhere victorious, and shall inaugurate a dispensation of glory and blessedness in the everlasting kingdom, of which we can now form no adequate conception.

And, on the contrary, the fruits of sin, all gathered together—the moral results of the reign of selfishness and iniquity, as seen in the experience of fallen angels and sinning men, presented at one view by the Judge of all—will be a spectacle of terror, and disgust, and abhorrence to the universe. The *necessity* of a separation will then be most apparent to all, unless God be willing to let sin gain the ascendency. The infinite mercy or favor of Christ, in forever separating these elements of guilt, and misery, and ruin, from his kingdom; in forever circumscribing their destructive power, and placing them all at an infinite remove from "heavenly places," will be matter of lively and eternal gratitude to saints and to angels.

Until such a separation shall take place, and the dispensation of rewards and punishments, consequent on this life, be established and enforced, the God of heaven will not be fully known. The testimony will not be complete. The perfection of his moral attributes will not be clearly established. The infinite purity and benevolence of the moral law will not be recognized. God's true position on a thousand questions will not be seen. The ways of Providence, to a great extent, will remain a sealed book. And there will be room for doubt, for hesitation, for moral weakness and misapprehension to come in and lead us astray. We shall have to feel our way along, and hope and wait for a better dispensation. It will come, blessed be God, and glorious will be the day of its coming.

Moral evil having run its prescribed course, and Christ having subdued the last enemy under him, he will finally *Separate* the discordant parts, eliminate every creature, every element of being, every force in the least tainted with sin, from his heavenly kingdom. And he will banish them all into "outer darkness"—to some remote corner or abyss in infinite

space, and confine them there in "prison," in "chains," so that it will be impossible for them longer to "hurt" or "vex" the saints. And then will begin "the reign of Righteousness and Peace."

The solemn act of final *Separation* at the Judgment-seat of Jesus Christ, will be the culminating scene in the most stupendous Drama ever enacted in the universe of God. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations; and *he shall separate them one from another*, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. . . . And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal." Matt. 25: 31–46. And thereby God will demonstrate to all his creatures, in the most impressive way possible, the *essential difference* which has eternally existed, and will eternally exist, between good and evil. Holiness and sin, obedience and transgression, will be shown, by that authoritative act of discriminating Justice, to be as morally unlike as God and the devil! as wide asunder as heaven and hell! The formal Separation, then made for eternity, will complete the contrast, which is partially developed in this world, and will present that contrast to the eye of the universe, in a light so clear, in relations so vast, and with a moral power so omnipotent, as to cause its great heart to beat evermore with a truer and healthier feeling.

That final parting will not be simply the parting of old friends, the sundering of earthly ties, the separation of one creature from another. That separation will be ruled by a principle of universal application, founded in the nature of God, and reaching down from his throne through all the ranks of intelligences, viz., the principle of a MORAL LIKENESS TO GOD. And as the great separating line is run by the Chief Shepherd, worlds will divide off, races will be parted, circles of relationship will be broken, friends will take their long farewells, and purity and impurity, life and death, heaven and hell, will withdraw to an infinite remove, the one from the other. And the

impress of eternity, of unchangeability, will be put upon every thing.

And now will Christ's great work of Moral Redemption stand forth complete. His last enemy will have been subdued. The seed of the woman will have crushed the head of the old serpent. The metes and bounds of guilt, and its terrible consequences, will have been fixed, so that they cannot pass. All the workers of iniquity will have been shut up; and, henceforth, Christ shall reign over a glorious and harmonious Kingdom, and the saints shall reign with him in glory.

Thus will the last Judgment form a Grand Epoch in the history of God's moral Kingdom. All its infinite affairs will be merged in one great DISTINCTION or DISCRIMINATION, in relation to moral virtue and moral transgression. The morally good are gathered into heaven; the morally evil are shut up in hell! The problem of evil is solved, and will never again disturb or vex creation. Time has had its moral uses and passed away. Probation has worked out its results and will exist no more. Everything has now put on a fixed, changeless type. Eternity has begun. Another scene is opened up.

We are permitted to go no further now in our investigations. We cannot lift the veil, even for a single glance into the future of heaven, or into the future of hell. It is impossible for us even to conceive the glory and blessedness of the heavenly state, under the everlasting reign of holiness and peace, with natures absolutely pure, and free, and noble, and tireless, and exalted, and glorified; and in circumstances and surroundings in which not one element of evil, or the least taint of impurity, can ever find its way. To what heights of dignity, worth, and blessedness, will man there attain! What forms of light, and beauty, and glory, will virtue there assume!

And it is equally impossible for us to conceive of a character in which the victory and the opposite or contrasted state of being and the sway of sin, are absolute, universal, unrestrained, unchangeable, eternal! It is impossible for us to conceive of a society, a whole community or world of existences, made up of just such hopeless, demoralized, and abandoned characters.

It is impossible for us to conceive of a condition and surroundings from which every element of goodness is absolutely and forever excluded. No natural affections, no self-respect, no self-control modifying the character. And nothing without to mitigate the power and bitterness of sin, but everything to fan the all-consuming fire, and to intensify the reign of death. And if we cannot conceive of a state so dreadful and hopeless, what will be its realization?

I cannot dismiss this solemn topic without a personal application of the doctrine discussed. To this very end it has been revealed.

The first idea I would impress on the reader's mind, and on my own, is the fact of our individual *personal* interest in the concerns of the Judgment day. In the vastness of the subject, the grandeur of the scene, and the innumerable multitude to be judged, there is danger that we shall lose sight, practically, of our personal interest in and relation to the transactions of that eventful day. Your relation, and my relation to and interest in it, are just as radical, just as great and absorbing, as if you or I were the only creature to be judged, the only being for whom all this preparation had been made, and this solemnity enacted. We shall not then think of our neighbor, but simply of our own soul, our own account, our own destiny. You, and I, and every man, will appear in person, to answer for himself, and not for another. Our eyes will look upon the Judge, our ears will hear his voice, our life will be reviewed by him, and all the secrets of the heart disclosed. Every man shall give account of himself to God. You and I will each make one of that vast group which will gather on the right, or of that other group on the left. How trifling, how transient, how low and mean, in that hour, will appear all other questions and interests, in contrast with the question then to be decided, and which is suspended on the lips of Christ, the Judge!

Are we living, each for himself, in the light of that burning Throne? Are we living as if we verily believed the Judgment day of Jesus Christ were a reality; and that our life, in all its thoughts, and failures, and sins, and fruits, were to pass under his searching inquisition, and that our eternity will take

on its impress from the moral character which this life shall stamp upon our souls? Is your account for that day made up? and is it such an account as you are willing to base eternal destiny upon?

Let each soul of us see to it that we deal honestly, and not "deceitfully," with himself. It is idle—it is worse—it is guilt's blunder, to lay "a flattering unction" to our souls; to adapt our theology to our evil life; to expect impunity in that awful day on any other ground than that which is laid down in the Scriptures. We are sure, if we do, to be disappointed at the last, when it will be too late to correct the mistake. And the self-deception will only add to the shame and bitterness of our eternal grief. "The ungodly shall not stand in the Judgment." "In due time their feet shall slide." Deceptions, false hopes, will stand no chance there. TRUTH only, the RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST only, penitently and believingly received by individual souls, will have any standing there, any acknowledged worth. Escape from condemnation, without previous repentance for sin and faith in the Divine Saviour, is impossible. As you have refused grace and pardon in Jesus Christ, you stand there on the ground of *Law*—God's eternal Law of rectitude—and that law will convict you of disobedience in ten thousand particulars. And that law contains no provision for pardon. Your own conscience and memory will rise up and condemn you. All the witnesses will be against you. Your companions in sin, the examples of the righteous, the entire system of redeeming agencies exerted upon you, the strivings of the Spirit—all will combine to criminate you. The Judge will be inflexibly strict. You will have no advocate. And the case must go against you. There will be no door of escape. And from that dreadful fall there will be no recovery. "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still." Oh it is moral madness to persist in impenitent sin, and brave the terrors and the scrutiny of the final Judgment, an enemy to God, a neglecter of so great salvation; with none to sympathize or help in all the crowd of attending saints and angels.

There is something in the thought of *Separation* that is exceedingly painful. Companionship, especially the companionship of love and friendship, is sweet. Many of the separations

experienced in this life are very hard to bear. The onward rush of time bears away from us often our loved ones. The changes and vicissitudes of life make sad havoc with our companionships. The farewells of the death-chamber, the partings at the grave, are heart-breaking. All these foreshadowings of the final Separation are meant to affect us, and do move us. But they are temporary and partial. The mind anticipates a reunion, sooner or later. But the separations at the Judgment are to be *final, forever, eternal!* Never more will hearts and lives, there sundered, come together again.

> "Oh there will be mourning,
> Mourning, at the judgment-seat of Christ,"

when the wicked shall all be separated from the righteous—separated from Christ and holy angels and glorified saints; separated from all that is pure, and bright, and glorious in life and destiny; and made to feel that all intercourse, all fellowship, all sympathy, is at an end. The separation will not be made on the ground that some are sinners and some are not; or that some are greater sinners than others. That question will not come up there at all. But the separation will be made on the ground that all are sinners equally under the law, and deserving condemnation; but that some are *penitent* sinners, while others are *impenitent;* some are *forgiven* sinners, in Jesus Christ, while others are *unforgiven*, having never "fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before them in the gospel." This simple yet radical distinction will sunder families, divide friends, separate members of the same communion. Husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, the pastor and the members of his flock—there they separate—one to the Right and the other to the Left. What partings! Can it be reality? Am I myself, in my own conscious being, to make one of these sundered mortals? Is my reader to go through the same experience? We have been joined here in the friendships, and loves, and intimacies, and relations of life. We have eaten at the same board; we have sat in the same pew in God's house; we have communed around the same table; we have joyed, and sorrowed, and suffered, and fellowshiped together, in this life. Oh, we *cannot* part! And yet part we *must*, and part *forever!* The final,

separating hour has come. The voice of the Judge, from "the great white throne," says, "Come"—"Depart!" "Depart from *me*," from all hope, and life, and purity, and happiness. Oh, to whom will these awful words be addressed? Will the reader, will the writer of these lines, be among the number? "And these"—oh, *who* are "these"? Am *I* among them? Is my dear *reader* among them?—"these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal."

Paul besought his brethren, by "the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ," to be "steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." I would take up the exhortation, and ring it out in the ears of a sleeping Church, and in the ears of a dying world, both hastening to the Judgment. And, by all the terrors gathering around that day—by all the interests and solemnities centering there—by all the awards to be determined and declared there—and by the lines of eternal destiny which will start forth from that tremendous event, and run upward to endless glory and blessedness, or downward "into blackness of darkness forever"—by all these considerations I would beseech the "prisoners of hope" to make the most of their day of grace. It is brief at best. It may be cut short. The sun may suddenly go down. Probation to you, to me, may close to-day. To-morrow we may be in eternity; and the great, the solemn lines of everlasting destiny have fallen on our path.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A FUTURE PROBATION.

It seems to be conceded, that the idea of another "chance" after death, for the sinner to redeem himself and escape the judicial consequences of his impenitent wickedness in this life, is gaining ground in the evangelical church, both among its ministers and lay membership. The last decade or two of years have wrought a *change* in this particular, the effects of which are too apparent and decided to be unrecognized or unchallenged. Not many of our religious teachers, in the evangelical fold, it may be, are prepared to avow openly their belief in a probation after death, or are willing squarely to deny the doctrine of eternal punishment as taught in the creeds of Christendom. But it is undeniable that not a few hold the former doctrine, at least in a modified form: while a much larger class have grave doubts on the subject: it is an open question in their minds. The subtle and pleasing deceit is at work extensively in the theological world, and its influence is apparent in the pulpit ministrations of the times. There is an intimate connection between this doctrine and the doctrine of future endless punishment. And no intelligent man will have the boldness to deny that the teaching of the Scripture doctrine of the eternal punishment of all who die in their sins has fallen extensively into disuse. Seldom, comparatively, is the doctrine now preached, as Baxter, and Edwards, and Griffin, and Lyman Beecher, and the mass of the evangelical ministers of past generations, used to preach it. And when it *is* preached, in these times, it is frequently preached apologetically. Ministers are often seemingly afraid to declare the whole counsel of God, "whether men will hear, or whether they will forbear." I have myself heard the most pitiable apologies for

preaching a doctrine so forbidding and so harrowing. I have heard also the people loudly denounce their pastor for preaching the Scripture doctrine in relation to "hell" and "eternal punishment" upon the incorrigibly wicked. There are churches without number, in all our evangelical denominations to-day, which will not "endure sound doctrine" on this subject. And so, to a great extent, the doctrine is either quietly ignored, or slightly and apologetically alluded to, by those who minister to them in the name of Christ. And such a public sentiment has been fostered that the pastor of one of the leading churches in Christendom may openly avow his rejection of the doctrine of eternal punishment upon the wicked as a "barbarous" doctrine—a doctrine which makes God a "moral monster," and still retain his ministerial standing among his brethren. Such a thing would have been a moral impossibility a generation back.

It will be generally conceded that there is no form of theological error more subtle, or more pernicious in its practical influence, than the error alluded to above, and which is already bringing forth fruit that may well alarm the friends of truth and righteousness. Either form of the error is fraught with infinite peril to souls. To believe or preach the doctrine of a probation for the sinner in the future world, is virtually to nullify the entire teaching and power of the gospel over sinners in this present life, defeat the end for which the Church was instituted, and stultify the prayers and efforts of Christians to bring sinners to repentance. Such is the uniform influence of sin on man, that so long as he sees there is a "chance" for him to escape final doom, he will be morally sure to continue to sin. The same influences which lead him to defer repentance to a death-bed, or to old age, or to some more convenient season in the future of this life, will be almost certain to lead him to take the "chance" of another life.

And the other form of error is equally fatal. To scout the doctrine of everlasting punishment as a "barbaric creed," begotten of "mediæval theology," "a terrific scheme, which sullies the honor, the justice, and the love of God,"* is to put a

* Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, in *North American Review*, Aug., 1882.

premium on transgression; is to impeach the wisdom and love of Christ in dying for sinners; is to rob the gospel of all power to reform men; is to insult the Divine Lawgiver, as guilty of moral weakness in attempting to govern his creatures without law or penalty; is to deny the Scripture doctrine of the "exceeding sinfulness of sin."

And *whence* has come this new light? What angel, what evangel, has revealed it to our time? Where is the proof of this new gospel? By what signs and wonders is it attested? I have sought, as doubtless others have, to answer these questions to my own satisfaction. But I have sought in vain. I have searched the Scriptures. I have studied the writings of those who ought to be able to give us light, if any new light has been discovered. I have analyzed the moral condition of things, and the working out of moral ideas and forces in human character, and in human history. But not one particle of *evidence* in support of such a doctrine have I been able to discover. I have not encountered one serious rational argument, or the semblance of one, or the formal attempt at one, in favor of the new belief. It is at best a crude speculation, a guess, "a chance," a "may be so," an assumed moral "probability," or a vehement declamation of sentimentalities. But such a thing as *argument* —intelligent, square, manly argument, based, either on Scripture, or on reason—cannot be found in the whole literature which clusters around this idea, this "new departure."

Surely it cannot be that so tremendous a factor is to be admitted into our theology, and to find expression in our pulpit teaching, and our religious literature, without any warrant from Scripture, or the reason of man, based on a thorough comprehension of the subject, and a calm, patient, and exhaustive analysis of the elements which enter into the problem. The interests at stake, both as they respect the life that now is, and the life that is to come, are far too momentous to allow any uncertainty, any superficiality, any mere dogmatic assertion or guess-work, on our part. The evidence should be so conclusive, so decisive and overwhelming, that we could not rationally deny or resist it, before we should be willing to give up the traditional faith of the Church, on this all-important point, and fall in with an idea that obviously trends against the

whole drift of the Scriptures, and the purpose and spirit of Christ's mission, and at the same time trends in the direct line of human depravity.

The Scriptures certainly lend no sanction to such an hypothesis. There is not one text in all the Bible, fairly interpreted, that declares or favors the idea of probation, for man or angel, in the future eternal state. While there are passages, without number, which, in a great variety of forms, and with intensity of expression, clearly teach and establish the opposite doctrine. And, not only this fact in favor of the orthodox and traditional view, but the additional fact, which cannot be gainsaid, that the whole structure and drift of the Scriptures are in the same direction. They are projected, from first to last, on the idea, the fact, the assumption, that the *present* is man's *only* probation, and if he sins it away, and "dies in his sins," he has nothing to expect beyond, but "a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour every adversary." A large part of the Bible is unintelligible, inconsistent, meaningless, on any other theory. Nay, the Bible is deceptive; it plays false; its extreme earnestness, and the anxiety of angels, and the intercession of Christ, and the strivings of the Holy Spirit, are, comparatively, unnecessary if, after all death is only going to change the sinner's *location*, and he is to have the same possibilities, and the same open-door of escape from "the tormentors" in eternity that he has in time. From Genesis to Revelation, the inspired Word not only declares, but assumes, the *limitation of God's mercy and forgiveness to this life.* It assumes that there is no repentance, no restoration, no moral cleansing, in the grave, or state of the dead. It assumes that in man, as in nature, "as the tree falleth so it lieth:" as "death leaves a man, so judgment findeth him:" that he who leaves the world "filthy," "will be filthy" forever. All the provisions, and promises, and threatenings, and appeals, and invitations, of the Gospel are based on the assumption, that it is "now or never" with those to whom they are addressed. That mercy, hope, forgiveness, the strivings of the Spirit, laying hold on salvation, fleeing from the wrath to come—all is limited to this present life. Not a hint, not a shadow of hope, is given anywhere, that Christ

may, in the hereafter, be found in peace by a solitary soul who passes the boundary of mortal life in a state of impenitent sin. Nay: there are intimations—there are direct warnings—that a man may pass the final limits of God's mercy and grace *before* he crosses the boundary of time. He may effectually grieve the Holy Spirit. He may become so "joined to his idols," as Ephraim was; he may come to pervert the truth so persistently, and sin so defiantly and willfully, and "believe a lie" because it is a lie, that God shall say, "Let him alone;" or shall "swear if he shall enter into his rest." And when once that invisible line is passed—and passed, I have no doubt it is oftener than we suspect—"perdition" is just as sure and inevitable to that man as if he were already on the other side of the great dividing line. Man has really but one chance in his moral history. If that is wasted and lost, it is wasted and lost forever. It is a universal, and an irreversible natural law, that moral character, and consequent destiny, attains final permanence in a very brief period; and final permanence in the nature of things can come but once. This fact is demonstrated in this world in instances without number. And being founded in the nature of things, this law will exist in the future world as well as in this. And it cuts off the possibility of any "chance" of reformation after death.

But if the Scriptures were silent on this point; if they left it an open question, there is still light sufficient, available to us from other sources, to satisfy any candid, reasonable mind, that the man who leaves this world unreconciled to God—not simply a sinner, but an impenitent, unforgiven, unrenewed, incorrigible sinner—has no ground whatsoever, in reason, or in the constitution of things, or in the light of the practical developments of this life, to expect either a moral change of character, or a reversion of moral destiny in the coming state of being. It is a most noteworthy fact, and one strangely overlooked by those who reason in favor of, or who half admit a second probation, that all *observation and experience in this life are directly in the line of Scripture teaching, and in opposition to the idea.* The constitutional, the uniform, the universal tendency and result of habitual sin here, cut off all rational hope

of a radical change or reformation in the future life, even if we were to admit the possibility of another "chance" being given man. For, the man who resists all the motives, and agencies, and influences of the truth and Spirit of God, in youth, in manhood, in middle life, and reaches the confines of old age, with a hardened and impenitent heart, *is morally sure to die in his sins.* He has not one chance in a thousand that he will have the disposition, or will seriously make the attempt, to change the habits and the feelings of his life, in the eleventh hour. So the man who begins his moral career on earth by sinful indulgences, and who, as the years advance, submits himself more and more to their domination—no matter what particular form or forms these indulgences take on—until he has riveted the chains of slavery upon soul and body, and has no longer at command the power of will or desire to assert his manhood or his liberty: such a man has no longer any reasonable hope left to him, either for the life that now is, or for the life to come. And the same is true in the experience of the man who begins, in early life, to doubt, in reference to some doctrine of the Bible. He goes on to doubt, to cavil, to question, to deny, to scoff, until he has torn the old Bible into shreds, and made it the butt of ridicule and witticism, and finally cast it from him in disgust or contempt, and it may be with an oath! And, what now, in after life, or beyond the grave, is to save that sinner from damnation? There is no moral basis left in his soul on which the truth or Spirit of God can act. He is totally demoralized and beyond the power of any redemptive agency or influence.

Now, for argument's sake, suppose you add a thousand years to the present life of such a man, and continue his probation all this time, and the working upon him of the same moral forces of virtue: have you thereby increased his "chance" of final repentance? Or, suppose you add a million of years on the other side of death, with the same favorable conditions annexed. Have you *then* increased his "chance" of eventuating in moral goodness? Not one whit, in either case. On the contrary, in the first instance supposed, you reduce the chance to a moral cipher. And in the second you demonstrate the moral impossibility of the change, and the absolute certainty

that it will never be wrought. And if, in all such cases—and they are not extreme cases—there is not foundation enough in the moral constitution of the man, nor power enough in the whole system of redeeming agencies and elements to reach and pluck him from ruin, *now, here,* in this world of grace, and in this probationary period, pray tell me, if you can, ye wise ones "above what is written," tell me, what will there be *beyond* the grave, if a thousand successive probations were afforded such sinners? What new dispensations of power and of grace, within and without, that will be sure to do for him what all the wisdom and power of God, and Christ, and the Holy Ghost, and the prayers and influence of Christians, were not able to accomplish in and for him, in this world?

But long ages of suffering will work a moral change; will cure his depravities, and unbind the chains of guilt, and bring him forth from prison, and efface the brand, "cursed," which Christ, at death or in the judgment day, put upon him. Here again you are in direct *conflict* with the constitutional law and effects of sin, as everywhere and conspicuously demonstrated in this world. And you cannot deny it. You cannot point to such a case in all the circle of your observation; unless it be a singular and exceptional case, to be accounted for on special grounds. While I can point you to any number of instances in which your doctrine is *falsified* in actual experience: in which suffering, as the fruit and punishment of sin, has tended only to *increase* moral obduracy, to *confirm* moral impenitence, to push the wretched sinner down into lower depths of iniquity and ungodliness and to extinguish the last gleam of hope of a future repentance. And yet these are the sinners who, in spite of their experiences here, will hasten to lay hold on the first "chance" that may happen to cross their path when they once get over the boundary line. These are the beings whose moral constitution is to be changed, and upon whom the constitutional laws of sin in their action are to be reversed; and what they intensely and habitually hated here, they are to love there; and what is the very element of life to them here, will there be their moral aversion!

"THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH!" Rom. 6: 23. That is the *law* of sin; and it is as real, as imperative and universal in the

moral kingdom of God, as the law of gravitation is in the natural. God has written that law on the human constitution; and its operation and force are everywhere, and distinctly and conspicuously seen in the life around us. Human history is but the echo and the illustration of it. It has no exceptions. You cannot alter that eternal law. A change of location, a change of worlds, of conditions and surroundings, will make no impression upon it. God has established the law, or rather it exists in the nature of things, and it is unalterable and eternal in its nature and force. *Sin is death!* not simply because God has affixed that penalty to it, and will inflict it, unless the sin be forgiven; but on the ground of eternal necessity. Such is the nature of sin, and such is the moral condition of man, that it works out just this result, and no other—always and everywhere, unless a higher power interpose to arrest the law. Sin never fails to draw after it retribution. Sin not only *tends* to death—leads, by direct or circuitous paths, to misery, and ruin, and perdition—but SIN IS DEATH. Death by its own infliction: death as the fruit, the legitimate result, of its own iniquity. It is not necessary for God to interpose to inflict it, or that we wait for the future life to develop it. *Hell is begun here*, in every sinner's experience, just as heaven is begun in the experience of every truly good man. Sin itself is hell—the principle, the very essence of it! The sinner creates his own hell. He carries it about with him. He is every day fanning the flames of it; coming more and more into the realization of it. And the act of death, and the exchange of worlds—only natural and outward changes, not affecting one iota the moral man—will have no effect whatsoever on the law of sin, or on the moral condition of the sinner. That law, from moral necessity, will be as operative *there* as *here;* and probably a hundred-fold more exacting and terrible. Because the restraints, and limitations, and modifying elements and agencies of this life, will be all removed there. There sin will have *full* sway, without check or hinderance of any kind; and tremendous will be its power, tremendous its moral effects, and tremendous its retributive force.

Comparatively, in this world, sin has but little opportunity to assert its inherent radical character, or to evolve its power

as an element of moral evil and wretchedness and destructiveness. The lifetime of man here is too short to do it. God found it necessary to *abridge* human life here from several hundred to seventy years, in order to save society from total corruption, and necessitate, as in the Deluge, a sweeping destruction of the race, and a re-planting of it at intervals of time. Besides, sin, while here, is put under a world of restraints, checks, modifications, and partial control, by means of laws, human and divine, and customs, and the natural affections, and educational influences, and public sentiment, and the discipline of Providence, and the influence of a thousand mercies, and the presence and power and prayers of the Christian Church, and the ministry of the Spirit of God. But for all these elements, conditions, and moral forces—ever acting on individual character, and on human society—how different a world would this be from what it even now is! What a different character would the sinner's be! How greatly reduced would his present "chance" of final repentance and restoration to God be, from what it even now is! And yet is it true—and the fact cannot be denied, and it is a fact of tremendous significance—such is the power of sin, as a moral force in the human soul, that in spite of God, and man, and society; in spite of the combined and mighty influences here at work to prevent it; in spite of their own fears of the future, and remorse for the past, it goes straight forward, in the great majority of cases, and with ever-accelerated momentum, to its legitimate consummation in the lowest depths of perdition. The process is never reversed: it is always from bad to worse. And if such are the demonstrated power and result of sin, in this short life, and in the conditions and surroundings of man here, what may be expected of it in the future state of endless duration, and in a world of unmixed retribution?

And yet there are men, and preachers of the gospel, who hold and teach, that out and forth from that very world of ultimated sinful character, and of hopeless moral bondage, and unutterable, and unmitigated, and God-abandoned depravities: from under the very sentence to "everlasting punishment,' which the Saviour of the world himself will pronounce against them at death and confirm in the great day of moral reckon-

ing – there will hereafter come souls, penitent for sin, renewed in spirit, restored to virtue! But in the name of all that is rational, we ask, whence is to come any redeeming, restorative influence? Who or what is to beget it? Will Hell itself originate, plan, or execute a moral redemption and deliverance? Is it morally capable of a holy thought, a holy purpose, an upward, God-ward movement? It is plain that God cannot open those prison doors, loose those chains, convert those lost spirits, pardon those pronounced culprits, and convoy them across the "great gulf fixed," and admit them into heaven, without unsettling the whole structure of the universe, destroying the relations of Sin to Retribution, Time to Eternity; without undoing the solemn transactions of the Judgment day, and falsifying his own record as it stands out before the universe.

Surely no saint or angel will have either the power or the disposition to interpose in the future world in behalf of those condemned by Jesus Christ on the ground of impenitent sin. On the contrary, the Scriptures declare that they will honor and magnify the act of Eternal Justice even in the final and tremendous infliction of deserved punishment upon the despisers and neglecters of "so great salvation."

And so the question comes back upon us, unanswered and unanswerable, Whence, in the future state of retribution, is to come any redeeming, any restorative influence, to do for the "belated sinner" what the whole system of Divine grace and providence failed to accomplish for him in this world of mercy and probation? What new motives will be urged? What more powerful means will be tried? What wiser and more effective influences will be devised? After resisting the combined efforts of God and man and angels, in circumstances most favorable to his salvation, and resisting them effectively with a hard and impenitent heart, all through life and at death, what miracle of power and wonder will hereafter wean him from his confirmed evil ways to the love of God and virtue? They who hold out such deceptive hopes to sinning man, or so much as suggest the possibility of such a thing for any class of sinners, are solemnly bound, in all fairness, to show some solid ground,

some good and substantial reason, for such a position. But they have failed to do so. They give us nothing but feeble negations, crafty insinuations, the suggestions of doubt, human speculation, gross misconception and caricature of scripture teaching, and feeble sentimentality. Carefully considered, the Future Probation theory, which is silently gaining ground among us, will be found to be without the slightest foundation in reason or Scripture.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE FUTURE OF THE UNIVERSE WHEN CHRIST SHALL HAVE DELIVERED UP THE KINGDOM TO THE FATHER.

SECTION I.

THE MEDIATORIAL IMPRESS UPON IT.

It has been sufficiently shown, for my purpose, that the constitution of the universe is Mediatorial in its character, by virtue of God's eternal purpose and appointment. All its affairs have been administered by the "one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." All the dispensations under which the moral government of God has been carried on, have had reference to this principle. It has shaped, guided, controlled, and put its impress upon the whole history of this world. Here the principle has been worked out on a conspicuous theatre, during the progress of Time, and under circumstances so wonderful as to concentrate upon our world the attention of all worlds, and to make the final results of the trial matter of the deepest interest and concernment to the entire universe of moral intelligences.

This peculiar, this wonderful administration, connected with the temporary and formative period of God's government, will come to a close, and a new economy will begin. The principles, the characters, and the moral results, wrought out and established by it, will become the factors, the leading features, and the controlling elements, in the new and ultimated order of things. Probation, having accomplished its high End, will cease forever to be. All moral beings, in heaven and in earth, who have passed through that condition of trial, will be reckoned with, final sentence will be passed upon them, and

their eternal destinies will be fixed. As the grand total resultant of the contact and conflict of moral principles, and moral forces, during the probation-period, the line of Separation will be drawn between the kingdoms of Light, and of Darkness, the children of God, and the children of the Devil. And that line will be extended through eternity. On the one side of it, heaven, and all holy beings, with Christ at the head, and the Father blessing it, and delighting in it evermore, will appear. And, on the other side, "the prince of devils," with all evil spirits, "cursed" of God, cut off from eternal life, banished into outer darkness, and given over to the torments of eternal retribution, will be seen.

The Scriptures afford us no light as to the relative *proportion of the number of the saved to the lost*, either as it respects angels or men. And conjecture on such a point were vain and presumptuous. Christ himself was once asked the question: "Lord, are there few that be saved?" And we know the manner in which he replied to the inquiry. As a practical question, however, it matters not in the least, either to the reader, or to the writer, or to any other man. But it does matter infinitely to each, whether he be among the saved or the lost. There are two thoughts on this point, however, which we feel justified in stating.

First: The results of the Mediatorial Dispensation will be such as to afford complete *satisfaction to the Infinite Mind.* There will have been no failure. There will be no ground for disappointment. All that was aimed at in the original purpose—all that the plan of Redemption contemplated—all that Christ sought in his incarnation, and death upon the cross—all that was expected of the dispensations of the Word, and of the Spirit, in relation to the gathering and the glorifying of a people to the praise of God's grace—will have been fully accomplished. And the Bible plainly declares that God the Father "is well pleased" with Christ's administration and its moral results; and that Christ himself is "satisfied with the travail of his soul," and will forever "rejoice in spirit" over the trophies of his victorious grace, and will be "exalted to the right hand" of the Father in the final kingdom, as a reward for his glorious services.

Secondly: Whether *few* or *many* of the human race shall be saved, in consequence of believing on Christ, will be a subordinate matter. It will be sufficient to shut every mouth, and to cover the Cross with infinite glory, if it shall be made to appear in the Last Day that every sinner, without exception, who fled to lay hold on the hope set before him in the Gospel, attained to life everlasting. The Divine remedy, whenever and by whomever applied, was found to be ample and efficacious. The ultimate End of the Mediatorial scheme, as the Scriptures testify, had respect to a vaster good, and a grander revenue of glory, than that involved in human salvation. That is the immediate end—the incidental end, as it were. And though exceeding great and glorious in itself, it will be eclipsed by the revelations and accomplishments of the "everlasting kingdom."

The Mediatorial Plan was an experiment in God's moral government—not of course a doubtful, but an assured experiment in the Divine Mind, from the beginning. It was a means by which God purposed to establish an "everlasting kingdom of righteousness and peace," which was to embrace in its scope "all places in his dominion," and extend its sway throughout eternity. The satisfaction resulting from the experiment, as contemplated in the Divine Mind; the sufficiency, the value, the adaptation of the means, in reference to the high ends of government proposed, were none of them contingent in the least degree upon the extent of the experiment, but only on its character; not on the number of souls actually redeemed, restored, and gathered into heaven from among the sinners of our world, but as to the possibility and the practicability of pardon for sin and restoration to forfeited life and blessings, without any reflection on the Divine character, or injury to the Divine government. And certainly, in the judgment of all rational intelligences, God's great moral experiment *has* achieved a grand success. And the number of the eternally saved, both of angels and of mankind, will be sufficiently great to demonstrate the wisdom, and the sovereign efficacy of God's chosen means to effectuate such a universal and perpetuated kingdom of moral goodness and blessedness as He purposed from all eternity. Indeed, had the experiment been on a much

smaller scale; had the ultimated holy characters, which came up out of the ruins of sin, and forth from the long and dreadful conflict with moral evil, to people the realms of glory, and to bear testimony to the sovereign efficacy of the blood of atonement, and the ministration of the Holy Spirit, been far less in number—not one in a thousand of the actual number—it would not have materially altered the case, or diminished the bearings and the influence of the Mediatorial provision and administration on the Future of the universe. The experiment in that case would have yielded all needed light and satisfaction. The redemptive provision, in its immediate practical results, would have still been shown to be adequate to the infinite work of shaping, and governing, and giving character and expression, to the life and the government of Eternity.

But now the experiment has been made to the satisfaction of Him who ordained it, and to the joy and rejoicing of all holy beings. The means proposed, by which all things were to be morally reconciled in Christ, and by Christ, and for Christ's mediatorial purposes, have been put in requisition and have achieved stupendous results, as the transactions of the public Judgment, and heaven and hell, can bear witness. No further experiments will be needed. No more expiations for sin will be called for. The principles which are to characterize God's administration of moral government, henceforth and forever, have all been wrought out and established, confirmed and declared in the awards of the Judgment. And on everything: on the throne of God, on the administration of moral government, on the whole life of the heavenly world, and even on the prison walls of the outcasts from God and life—the condemned spirits of wickedness—there will be the impress of Christ's hand, the impress of the Cross. One life has gone out into all the saved. One character has hallowed and blessed it all. One power has shaped, molded, controlled, fixed it all. One will has dominated all the forces, moral and providential, natural and supernatural, which have ultimated all these great and fixed results. One spirit, one principle, one purpose, one policy pervades them all, and is over and in them all, and will continue to give life, and expression, and development, and growth, to them all, while immortality endures.

Then, and not until then—not until the remotest period of Eternity has been reached, in the onward flow of the Future—will the *full* scope of the Mediatorial work of Christ, and the grandeur of its results, be fully seen. The circle of Redeeming Grace will be perpetually widening. The characters of those whom Christ rescued from sin and death, and elevated to "heavenly places," will be forever brightening, and their happiness and usefulness, in the Kingdom of God, will be forever augmenting. Even holy angels will be greatly advanced in holiness, in honor, and in the rewards of the eternal state, by reason of their relations to the "one Mediator," and their long, and faithful, and intimate ministry in behalf of the saints of Jesus Christ. And the "everlasting punishment" of the wicked will take on its character from the Mediatorial administration. Rebellion broke out under the Divine government, by reason of the exaltation of Christ to the throne of heaven. The sin of devils, from first to last, is sin against Jesus Christ as "the anointed of God" and the Saviour of mankind. All their malignity and hatred, and hellish opposition and wickedness, aimed to pull down the cross of the atoning Son of God and defeat its gracious purpose. Already has his hand been laid upon them in righteous retribution, tearing off their heavenly crowns, and cutting them off from the privileges of "sons of God." Already will they have been arraigned at his bar, and reckoned with, and judicially "cursed," and banished, and forever separated from the virtuous, and from life and hope, and incarcerated in the prison of despair. Every chain they wear; every bar and bolt in their horrid prison; every element in that cup of woe which they are to drain to its dregs, will remind them of Jesus Christ, whom they fought to dethrone; of Jesus Christ, whom they sought to destroy while he dwelt in the flesh, and whose kingdom they resisted to the bitter end. His will be the dreadful yet righteous judgment, meted out to them. And in all that melancholy, hopeless, tormented life, which they will be condemned to drag out under retribution, the one name that will be associated with all their gloomy thoughts, and all their terrible experiences, will be that Name which is so dear to all the heavenly hosts that Name which is wafted on the alleluiahs of rejoicing saints and

angels—the name Christ Jesus, the Lord, the Saviour of men! And thus Eternity will perpetuate Christ's redemptive work, and on a broader and grander field will forever augment the power and the glory of it.

SECTION II.

THE EVERLASTING SONG OF HEAVEN OVER A COMPLETED REDEMPTION.

The Lord Jesus Christ, as mediator and administrator of supreme government, we are taught in Scripture, will hereafter cease to exercise these functions, and the Godhead will revert to its normal state. God's design in the mediatorial provision having been fully and gloriously accomplished, in the person and work of his well-beloved Son, Christ will resign his peculiar official authority and trust into the hands of the Father, from whom he received them, and become himself subject (that is, in his human nature) to the everlasting Father. And thereby God the Father will put in subjection to him the most exalted and honored of all creatures, and take to himself the absolute and undivided glory of all things. As creature existence has received its highest distinction in the human nature of Christ, and, after the amazing transactions of the Judgment, it might almost appear as if the creature had become supreme; so it seems fitting, and so as a fact it will be, in that same person there will be made the most significant and impressive humbling ever made by a creature, that God may be all in all. The voluntary surrender of mediatorial power and office, so long exercised and upheld, and made illustrious by such amazing displays of wisdom, power, and glory, will do more than all things else to exhibit the vanity of the creature, and the supremacy of the Creator.

"And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." And again: "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the

kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority, and power." 1 Cor. 15: 24, 27. Commentators have variously explained this remarkable passage. But its meaning seems unmistakable. To my mind it clearly teaches that the ultimate end of Mediation, and human Redemption, growing out of it, is God's glory. The work of Christ, incarnate in the flesh, and dying for the sins of the world, and redeeming a people from moral ruin, and elevating them to glory immortal, and inaugurating the reign of everlasting "righteousness and peace," is the grand measure of the redemptive purpose. That glorious object gained; all those given to Christ in the covenant of grace, purified by him from all iniquity, and restored to the Father's love, and fixed in mansions of glory on high; and every enemy of righteousness subdued, and reckoned with, and actually shut up in hell; the principles of truth and holiness everywhere triumphant, sin overthrown, the moral law invested with the highest possible sanctions, and the principles of moral government wrought out in the history of the Cross, and perpetuated in the life and happiness of Heaven, and in the death and perdition of the wicked—the necessity for a mediatorial throne, and the exercise of mediatorial prerogatives, will then have ceased; and so the delegated power will revert to its original eternal Source; retire from the apprehension of creature vision into the bosom of "the invisible God," "who dwelleth in light inaccessible and full of glory." The *work*, the stupendous, the ever-glorious, ever-augmenting work, will remain, and will remain an eternal monument of the achievements of Grace, although the person of the Mediator, the Administrator, the Redeemer, will cease to have dominion, that the uncreated God may receive all the glory. The mediatorial administration of the divine government shall come to a close, but the influence of it on the interests of the divine empire shall never end.

"The duration of this Kingdom is limited. The necessity for it will then have ceased; the purpose for which it was established will have been accomplished. The God-man will surrender his delegated dominion to God, even the Father. The Mediatorial will be merged into the IMMEDIATORIAL Kingdom, and the Son himself be subject to Him who put all things under him. The Incarnate Deity will

remain incarnate; in his Divinity coequal and coeternal still, as of necessity he ever must be, with the other Divine Persons; but as clothed in one nature, and as everlasting Head of his Body the Church, he will be officially subordinate to God; and thenceforth God, as such, the Eternal Three-One, be *all in all!* ALL IN ALL, in the delighted consciousness of every creature throughout the realm of goodness and blessedness; in the exercise of government ALL IN ALL, likewise, to the apprehension and everlasting torment of unholy beings in the prison of despair."*

This official resignation and subjection of Christ to the Father, will not affect in the least the achievements of the Cross. Christ will not resign his trust until the awards of eternity shall have been made. Having gathered into the everlasting kingdom the matured fruit of his "travail of soul," he will rejoice over it with eternal rejoicing. Heaven, in the measure of its life and bliss, will be the measure of angelic, and of human indebtedness, to his grace. Eternity will be the duration of the accomplished work. The principles which Christ died to work out and enthrone, will have taken effect everywhere, and will bear fruit throughout the kingdom of God. Angels will shine in glory. "Thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, in heavenly places," will preserve their dignity and integrity, by reason of Christ's all-sustaining power in the day of fiery trial and rewarding grace, for faithful service in his conflict with sinning angels, and with the forces of human depravity here on earth. Saints innumerable will derive their very life in heaven from Christ, their living Head, for he is "the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." All their springs will be in him. Their glorified spirits, and their bodies, raised up from the grave, and "fashioned" after his glorious body, will but reflect and body forth His glory—the glory He is to receive of the Father in his exaltation. For Christ himself is to be honored and exalted by the Father, in the great Future, in reward for "his sufferings unto death," and as "Mediator of the new covenant," as he was not honored even while upon the mediatorial throne, and wielding the sceptre of universal dominion. The line of moral Separation, stretching across the boundless domain of God, and

* Dr. Skinner, "Discussions in Theology," p. 261.

running down the everlasting ages, will be but the perpetuation of Christ's power and work of Grace. And even the retributive awards of Justice—the darkness, the despair, the punishment, of the world of outcast and convicted wickedness —will be but the outcome of Christ's great and universal moral victory: will be but the result of the ascendency of the principles of His Kingdom—principles for which he died upon the cross, and to uphold which, and establish which, he planted his Church in Eden, when the Devil had despoiled it, and put eternal enmity between him and the seed of the woman; and to maintain which, and carry to a successful issue, such stupendous supernatural agencies and forces had been put in requisition, and the Eternal Spirit had been sent down, and the whole machinery of Providence had been constituted and employed from the beginning of Time until the day of final Judgment.

There is one aspect of the retributions of eternity, of *special* significance, as it relates to mankind; it is an aspect which the Scriptures present in a very clear and strong light, and one which shows how radical will be Christ's relations to the universe throughout eternity. "That sinners will *perish* notwithstanding an atonement for them, is one of the most flagitious and tremendous facts in the history of evil. The fact is so awfully melancholy, and on some theological principles, so unaccountable, that many have disputed the reality of it." But the Word of God declares the fact beyond a doubt, and the reason for it. It solemnly asseverates as facts, that Christ died for all men, and yet that all will not be saved. And it just as distinctly and clearly sets forth the moral grounds on which the facts are based. The provision is ample for the salvation of all. Not a sinner need perish for whom Christ died. And the one, the sole reason, why *any* do perish, to whom the offer of pardon is made, is their *rejection* of "the Lord who bought them." That is the whole of it. That covers the entire ground. That is the Bible explanation. You may search creation over; you may reason, and philosophize, and cavil, and argue, until doomsday, and you cannot find so much as the shadow or resemblance of any *other* reason. And *that* is the awful charge made against the sinner, by Christ himself,

and reiterated on almost every page of his gospel: "Ye will not come to me that ye may have life." And the reason of this "not coming" is given, and given with terrible emphasis. The moral ground of the refusal is sharply defined, so that we cannot be deceived or mistaken, in reference to it, except willingly. And yet that reason or ground seems almost too shocking to contemplate, in its moral character, and in its bearings on the world of retribution. "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now have they no cloak for their sins." John 15: 22. "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." John 3:19. "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses; of how much sorer punishment suppose ye shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" Heb. 10: 28, 29. "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" Heb. 1: 23.

These scriptures prove conclusively, that many whom Christ "sanctified with the blood of the covenant" will ultimately reject the mercy and grace treasured up in that covenant, and will thereby incur a heavier condemnation than if he had not interposed to save them. The *damning* sin of every soul that perishes under the gospel ministration—the sin which will give *character* to their depravity, and bring down upon them the wrath of "God and the Lamb"—will be their unbelief, and *willful impenitent rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ.* Not as the Sovereign of the universe will Christ judge, and punish the rejecters of his love and grace, in the last judgment; but in his character and relation as Mediator, Intercessor, Redeemer. His death, his interposition and services in their behalf, will appear all glorious even in the eternal overthrow of all who rejected his mediation, and contemned his love and grace. The apostle affirms that his ministry was a "sweet savor unto God," even "in them that *perish.*" And this will be specially true of the higher ministry of Christ, in the case of every soul that persists in sin, and perishes under

condemnation. Hence in Revelation, in view of the ultimated and fixed state of the Future Kingdom, all holy beings are represented as singing in everlasting concert: "Amen! Alleluia! Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing."

Thus it is seen that the entire system of future rewards and punishments will be based upon, and will be the outcome of, Christ's Mediatorial work. And as that system is to be unchangeable in its nature, and in the purpose of God, and necessarily, therefore, eternal; so the power and glory of his achievement will never cease to live and to shine—even if the stars should fall, or come to lose their lustre, in some far-off period of duration. "The eternity of a happy universe will be perpetually and progressively unfolding the glories" of the Christian system, for, "amid all the splendor, and blessedness, and joy of the heavenly world, the LAMB will be the light thereof.

> "Redemption is the science and the song
> Of all eternity. Archangels day
> And night into its glories look. The Saints,
> The Elders round the throne, old in the years
> Of Heaven, examine it perpetually,
> And every hour get clearer, ampler views
> Of right and wrong: see Virtue's beauty more;
> See Vice more utterly depraved and vile:
> And this, with a more perfect hatred hate;
> That, daily, love with a more perfect love."

As the theatre of this mighty and glorious Redemption, our world is honored more than any other. It is the seat of that Empire of moral Ideas and Forces which are destined, in the fullness of the ages, to harmonize all things in Christ; to gather together, in one blessed unity of Brotherhood, all the sons of God; and to dominate the life and the government of the everlasting kingdom. Hence it is that Life—human life here in this world—your life and my life, is a more sacred, a more responsible reality, and a more important and weighty factor, than if it had been cast in any other part of God's empire. There is going out from this world—there is going out from your life, and from my life, all the while—an influence that

will be felt to the ends of God's moral creation; an influence that will not only enter into the future moral history of this world, and be a factor in molding and developing its life and character; but will also enter into the *life everlasting*, and tell on the destinies of eternity. He alone who knows the Future, and is able to trace effects back and up to their causes, can estimate the value, the power, or the measure of a single human life, here amid the scenes of the crucifixion, amid the activities and the conflicts of the kingdom of the reigning and all-conquering Christ.

"History may record her eventful eras, when all the powers of earth were drawn up in hostile array, and all its interests were suspended on a single conflict. Such may be regarded to have been the case when the great question was to be decided by a single blow between Greece and Persia, whether freedom or slavery should be the future inheritance of mankind: when the victory of Constantine determined whether Paganism or Christianity should hold the throne of the Roman Empire: when on the plain of Tours it was decided whether the Crescent should prevail over the Cross, in the West, as it had done in the East, and whether Imposture should drive Truth from the earth: when, on the event of the Spanish Armada, it was to decide whether Popery or Protestantism was to prevail, whether the earth should belong to Christ or to Antichrist,"* and when on the field of Waterloo the armies of Europe decided the fate of "the man of destiny." These were grave and decisive eras. They changed the face of the world, and the currents of human history.

But the *moral* conflicts of this life, in their relation to the Eternal state, are every day raising issues and creating eras, far more momentous in their relations and ultimated effects, than any of the events which relate merely to things seen and temporal, however great and interesting in themselves. And both the reader, and the writer of these lines, are responsible actors in these conflicts, and will one day be reckoned with, by the supreme Judge of all things, for their share of responsibility in the work of deciding them. Indeed, human *Life* itself, here, in the light of the Cross, in contact with all the forces of Chris-

*Dr. Harris, in "The Great Commission," p. 473.

tianity, and wrought upon by the Spirit of all grace, is an era of infinite magnitude; and, whichever way the scale be turned, it will be turned for *eternity*, for our everlasting weal or woe. No creature that God ever made, has a more golden opportunity afforded him than you and I— an opportunity that has in it all possibilities of an exalted and glorious destiny. We belong to a race which God has honored as he has honored no other race. We have been born into a world which Christ has sanctified by his death, and distinguished above all other worlds by his love and grace. For our salvation Time and Probation exist, the Word of God reveals the unseen and eternal, the Church, the Sabbath, the Ministry of men and of angels, are ordained, the Holy Spirit is sent down, and the whole course of Providence is shaped, and Heaven waits, with the solicitude and yearnings of paternal affection, to welcome us to life. And to let *such* an opportunity to lay hold on eternal life, and to come up from the ruin and death of sin into light, and peace, and glory immortal, slip from us by neglect, or by willful, obstinate persistence in evil, is to act a part of unparalleled folly and wickedness. If *perish* we will, in the guilt and pollution of our sins, it were a thousand-fold better for us to perish in some *other* world than this; under some other dispensation than the dispensation of mercy and grace in Jesus Christ; in relations different from those which now connect us with the word of salvation, and with the Church of the living God, and with the prayers, and example, and teaching of the good, and which make us "prisoners of hope," and bring heaven down to us, and cause us to feel "the powers of the world to come," and at times almost persuade us to be Christians. Yes, if *perish* we will, in outer darkness, and under the "curse" of the Lamb, it will be the greatest possible calamity that Christ died for us; that the Word of God was ever put into our hands; that the stars ever shone to light our pathway to the skies; that the Sabbath's holy quiet and heaven-reminder ever fell on our heart; that the Holy Spirit ever strove with us, and prayer ascended to God in our behalf. Oh, if we could be judged, in the last awful day, by one who had not loved us, and died for us, and pleaded with us, and borne and forborne with us through so many years of neglect and wrong-doing: if our

retributive state were not to be imbittered by regrets over wasted opportunities, by memories, so many and so painful, running back to this life, and over all our earthly experience—if these things were not to be, Judgment and Retribution would not be such melancholy and tremendous realities to the despisers of salvation.

SECTION III.

THE NEW HEAVENS AND THE NEW EARTH.

I HAVE traced the line of thought which I had marked out for myself in this work, as fully as my space permitted, down to the close of the splendid Mediatorial administration of the Divine government. Beginning with God's eternal purpose, as expressed in the appointment of "the one Mediator," I have endeavored to show the extent, the practical workings, and the ultimated results of this provision, as gathered up in the final Judgment, and fixed in the awards of the Eternal state. I have sought to bring out the universality of the relations of Christ's death as an Expiation for sin, and as a moral reconciling Force; the relations of his Redemption to angels, both fallen and unfallen, and to mankind, the saved and the lost, in this probationary period, and in the final state of retribution—its relations to moral government, and to the future "everlasting kingdom of righteousness and peace," as well as to the salvation and final state of mankind. I have briefly outlined the chief subjective forms of Christ's life and kingdom of grace on earth, and disclosed the End for which his Church was ordained and has been conserved in all ages of time, and will finally be made to triumph over all opposing forces and crowned in heaven. I have passed in review the amazing work of the Resurrection; the tremendous events of the general Judgment; the final Sentence of life upon the righteous, and the final Sentence of death upon the wicked, and the judicial Separation of evil, in every form, from the loyal universe, and its banishment from God's presence, and its confinement and

punishment under the hand of righteous retribution. And, finally, I have shown briefly, from the nature of things, and from the law of moral development, as brought out and established in the history of this world, the utter groundlessness of any hope of another probation in the world everlasting.

Rapid and somewhat general as this review has necessarily been, both from the limitations of space, and the comprehensiveness and vastness of the subject, I still hope that I have succeeded in imparting to my reader some new interest in the grand theme; some broader views of the glorious work of Redemption, which Christ is achieving in our world, and a deeper sense of our personal relations to this "chief of all God's works," and our obligations and responsibilities in relation to it.

Two questions only remain, which I desire to consider before I close the discussion, and I shall do little more than outline them. One of them has reference to the Future of God's government; and the other to the character of "the new heavens and the new earth," which are to succeed the present order of things.

1. First, then, *How far* do the benefits of Christ's death extend? Are they limited to the achievements of the Cross in this world, and to mankind? It is conceded, at the outset, that divine revelation confines our attention *chiefly* to earth, as the theatre, and man as the subject, of Christ's Redemption. This, of course, is what might have been expected. And yet, on careful examination, we find that the circle of redemptive influences and agencies is by no means *confined* to this comparatively narrow and temporary sphere and theatre. For, we have seen in our discussions, that the *principles* which enter into and lie at the foundation of the mediatorial administration, are *universal* in their relations and applications; equally so to all moral and accountable beings in all God's universe; and, as matter of revealed fact, that holy angels and sinning angels, as really as mankind, are under the sway of these principles. We find that "all heavenly places," as well as this little world which we inhabit, are acted upon by the influences which go out from the Cross of Christ; and that, not incidentally, but by reason of the Divine purpose; that the actual

scope and object of Christ's death, as expressed in the Church gathered in his name, and by his grace, and for his glory, were to "reconcile *all things*" in the moral universe, and gather together in one great commonwealth all loyal subjects, under the reign "of righteousness and peace" in the everlasting kingdom.

The Bible specifies but three great divisions, or classes, of moral existences, viz., the human, the angelic, and the fallen; it specifies but three worlds (if we include "all heavenly places" in the term "heaven"), viz., earth, heaven, and hell; and all of these are radically affected by the power, and grace, and justice of the "one Mediator." On the principles of fair reasoning, then, in the absence of all evidence to the contrary, we are justified in believing that these universal principles of moral government, and moral existence, and moral destiny, wrought out so conspicuously in this world, and at such an infinite sacrifice on God's part, and amid such splendor of administrative power and glory, and then confirmed in the great day of public Judgment, and signally illustrated in the awards of eternity, will be upheld, and applied, and enforced, wheresoever, in space, or in eternity, there are worlds and creatures to be governed, and rewarded, or punished.

To suppose the *contrary* would seem to reflect on the wisdom and goodness of God. Whence all this preparation, and sacrifice, and expenditure, through thousands of ages, if the system of government, brought to perfection by the one Mediator, and made everywhere triumphant over the enemies of righteousness, and which has peopled "all heavenly places" with holy, and joyous, and immortal spirits, shall in the future be suspended or set aside, and some other scheme concocted, some new experiment tried? Can it be that God can improve upon Christ's work, Christ's administration? Can it be that the idea of "progress" shall seize upon the Divine Mind, and the unchangeable God shall go about to "tinker" his own eternal plans, or devise some "new measures," or principles, for governing his creatures? Such a suggestion is preposterous, well-nigh blasphemous. With all reverence, it may be confidently affirmed, that God can never improve upon Christ's finished and all-glorious work. He can never find a Diviner

sacrifice than he has already found in his own beloved Son. No being, divine or angelic, can ever endure or perform greater things than Christ has endured and achieved. No greater or grander principles can God ever sanction, uphold, vindicate, or enforce, than those which underlie and characterize the Christian system. No more powerful and effective means and agencies, for giving these principles effect, can God ever devise; for they are *already* the very wisdom of God, and power of God unto salvation; and God cannot excel *himself*.

Hence, it would seem clear—just as certain to our moral apprehension as if it were direct matter of revelation—that the benefits of Christ's death may be extended to other worlds, whose inhabitants are passing through their probationary period, so that the circle of the blessing, arising from the sacrifice of Calvary, may be forever widening. Newton taught the "plurality of worlds." The Herschels have enlarged our conceptions on this subject. Modern astronomy leaves no room to doubt—what reason asserts as highly probable—that numberless worlds are peopled by races adapted to their respective conditions. It is unreasonable, if not unscriptural, to regard "all heavens" as vast solitudes of inanimate matter. The "many mansions" which Christ has gone to prepare for his people in his "Father's house," "are the innumerable stars, and suns, and systems," which compose the universal temple. And there, in some of those "many mansions," the angelic "thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers," sway their empires.

New dispensations of the mediatorial system may and doubtless will occur, after the Judgment, in the onward roll of God's infinite plans, and the extension of his moral government over new races of intelligences. The restoration of man from the power of sin, and from the curse of the law, may be only the *first* in a series of similar moral achievements in other worlds, which sin may have invaded or shall yet invade. And these future achievements may be on a much grander scale than the limits of earth and time afford. We are not to suppose, for a moment, that the Infinite God will have exhausted his resources, when the Judgment day of this world shall have been reached, and the great questions relating to it have been

all determined. True, a more perfect righteousness can never be found. A higher love and wisdom will never be disclosed. A more precious and effective sacrifice will be impossible. And, thank God, none will be needed. The system, the principles, the agencies, are already complete and adequate, and in their nature capable of universal application during all the cycles of the "everlasting kingdom." And yet there are doubtless "hidings of God's power" in the vast scheme of Mediation and Redemption which will not be brought out here. Time and earth are but specks in space and duration, in the Infinite Mind, contrasted with the universe, and with eternity. And it is possible that the sphere of Christ's Kingdom of grace, and power, and glory, may be enlarged, and that new appliances, and new providential forces, may be put in requisition, and new circumstances, and new combinations of influences may arise, in some distant ages of the Future, that shall impart new power and efficacy to the principles and provisions of the redemptive system, of which Christ is the author and the central force. And is the thought unreasonable—is there not inspiration in it?—that, as holy *angels* have come down out of heaven to exercise their blessed ministries in lapsed man's behalf; so the *saints* will be appointed by the divine Redeemer to a similar mission to some sun or star (it may be many of them) in the stellar heavens?

But not to push the suggestion further, I submit a pertinent passage from a sermon by Bishop Porteous. Long as it is, it is well worth the reading:

"It is, I believe, generally taken for granted, that it was for the human race alone that Christ suffered and died; and we are then asked with an air of triumph, whether it is conceivable, or in any degree credible, that the eternal Son of God should submit to such indignity, and so much misery, for the fallen, the wicked, the wretched inhabitants of this small globe of earth, which is a grain of sand to a mountain; a mere speck in the universe when compared with that immensity of worlds and systems of worlds, which the sagacity of a great modern astronomer has discovered in the boundless regions of space.

"But on what ground is it concluded that the benefits of Christ's death extend no further than to ourselves? As well might we suppose that the sun was placed in the firmament merely to illuminate

and warm this earth that we inhabit. To the vulgar and illiterate, this actually appears to be the case. But philosophy teaches us better things: it enlarges our contracted views of the divine beneficence, and brings us acquainted with other planets and other worlds, which share with us the cheering influence and the vivifying warmth of that glorious luminary. Is it not, then, a fair analogy to conclude that the great spiritual light of the world, the fountain of life and health and joy to the soul, does not scatter his blessings over the creation with a more sparing hand? And that the sun of righteousness rises with healing in its wings to *other orders of beings* besides ourselves? Nor does this conclusion rest on analogy alone. It is evident from Scripture itself that we are by no means the only creatures in the universe interested in the sacrifice of our Redeemer. Eph. 1: 10; Col. 1: 16-20.

"From intimations such as these, it is highly probable that in the great work of redemption, as well as of creation, there is a vast stupendous plan of wisdom, of which we cannot at present so much as conceive the whole compass and extent: and if we could improve and assist the mental as we can the corporal sight; if we could magnify and bring nearer to us, by means of instruments, the great component parts of the spiritual, as we do the vast bodies of the material world, there can be no doubt that the resemblance and analogy would hold between them in this as it does in many other well-known instances, and that a scene of wonders would burst in upon us from the one, at least equal, if not superior, to those which the united powers of astronomy and optics disclose to us in the other.

"If this train of reasoning be just (and who is there that will undertake to say, much more to prove, that it is not so?); if the redemption wrought by Christ extends to other worlds, perhaps *many others* besides our own; if its virtues penetrate into heaven itself; if it gather together 'ALL THINGS' in Christ, who will then say that the dignity of the Agent was disproportioned to the magnitude of the work? and that it was not a scene sufficiently splendid for the Son of God himself to appear upon, and to display the richness of his love, not only to the race of man, but to many other intelligent beings? Upon the whole, it is certainly unpardonable, in such a creature as man, to judge the system of our redemption from that very small part of it which he now sees—to reason, as if we were the only persons concerned; and on that ground to raise cavils and objections." *

* Vol. II., Sermon 3.

Secondly. "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." 2 Peter 3: 13. How are we to interpret this passage? Observe its connection. "The day of the Lord" has come. "The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burned up." And then shall appear "the new heavens, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Is this language only figurative, or is this world to be literally "burned up," in the day of judgment? Is the idea here presented by the spirit of inspiration that of *destruction* or *purification?*

The latter, I think, is the meaning. Purification seems more consonant with the character and work of Christ than destruction. His mission was a mission of life, not of death. He came to give life, not to take it: to save men from their sins, not to punish them in their sins: to cleanse them and thereby fit them for a higher life, and not to consume them in his wrath. And what can be the purpose of burning up the world? God pronounced it all "very good" at its creation. It needs purification and restoration, for it has been defiled and "cursed" by reason of sin. It needs just such a radical cleansing, purifying, reorganizing, as this intense language and imagery set forth. But once lift the "curse" off from it, and let the Creator's original benediction be again bestowed upon it, and what a glorious world will it once more be!

It seems to me also eminently *fitting* that Christ should extend his redemptive work as far as sin has extended its ravages; and since the earth was cursed solely for man's sake that curse should be taken off when the redemption of the race becomes an accomplished fact. It would seem as if a part of the Redeemer's work were not done, and sin not wholly conquered, if the dreadful effects of transgression on the physical universe were not also removed, and the work of restoration and purification made complete. A process, a renovation, a restoration, analogous to this, we know, does take place in regard to the human *body.* That is matter of the same kind and nature as the earth; indeed Adam was formed out of the earth. But Christ does not burn up or

destroy the human body, but he purifies and restores it, and glorifies it (so far as the saints are concerned): and the salvation of believers would be incomplete if it were not so. Christ is the Saviour of the body as well as of the soul. And so I believe, in the judgment day, when "the devil and his angels" shall be cast out of this world, as they were cast out of heaven, and when the last incorrigible sinner of Adam's race shall be hurried away to perdition, the Redeemer of men, by his almighty power, and in the exercise of his boundless grace, will new-create the physical earth and heavens (the firmament); climinating every element of evil from it, restoring to it its pristine beauty and glory; and thereby fitting it for the abode of "righteousness;" either for the abode of the saints, or for some other order of beings whom he shall create and put in possession of it.

The truth suggested by the imagery of "a new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness," is far broader, and of deeper and more glorious significance, than we are wont to suppose. There is a mysterious yet real connection, between moral evil and material imperfection, disorder, and decay. This is illustrated in our own physical existence. But for sin our *bodies* had been immortal ; they had never known age, decay, or dissolution. But for sin, the body had never felt pain, weariness, or disorder of any kind. Sin has marred the human visage, impaired every power and function of our animal life; and so tainted, corrupted, and debased our whole physical nature, that nothing short of the dissolution of its component elements, and a new creation or total renovation and restoration, shall suffice to fit it for the kingdom of righteousness.

And the same is true of our *world.* Read the language of the original "curse." And how literally has it been verified! How heavy, how burdensome, how destructive to peace and happiness, and even life, is it! What deadly exhalations, what destructive forces, what disturbing and oppressive influences, are experienced from it, continually and on every hand! And only a remnant of its divine beauty and loveliness remains. What a vivid idea does Paul give us of this sad truth, when he testifies, "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and

travaileth in pain together until now." Rom. 8: 22. It is doubtless also true of *heaven* itself, or *was* once true of it. The awful sin of Lucifer and his angels, towering to the very throne of the Most High, and burning in mad fury in myriads of hearts, scattering "firebrands, arrows, and death" in heavenly places, could not have failed to leave its impress on the physical, as well as on the moral and spiritual constitution of that exalted kingdom. And it may be true of *other* worlds, and systems of worlds, in God's vast empire. We know not to what *extent* sin has invaded God's universe. But just to that extent the *physical*, as well as the moral and spiritual handiwork of the Creator needs purification, and renovation, and readjustment. And, as all things were made by Christ, and for Christ, and in Him all things "CONSIST," so his redeeming hand will doubtless be seen and felt on the entire physical universe. It will be reconstructed by his power, just as the bodies of the glorified saints will be new-created by him, in order to adapt them to the new and perfect kingdom of the everlasting.

There is, to our apprehension, in this life, a manifold and wonderful *connection between a sinner's moral state and a perfect state of material nature.* We see this law in operation all around us. The earth's experience everywhere is in keeping with it. The physical is universally degraded, marred, ugly, hateful, where sin is dominant. Among nations where God is not known, where idolatry reigns, and barbarism prevails, the human body loses all its comeliness, and the physical aspects of nature are, for the most part, dreary and desolate. But, as they come up in the moral scale, under the civilizing and new-creating power of Christianity, the change, the improvement of the outward and the physical, keeps pace with the growth of the new life within. Pure moral ideas and habits invariably beget purer, more refined and elevated physical ideas and habits among the people, as well as brighter aspects in nature. There is no such civilizing, elevating, beautifying force in human society as Christianity. And its absolute and universal reign on earth, would restore the earth itself to more than its pristine beauty and glory. Who has not been surprised at the exhibition of the power of Christ, the influence of holiness,

in *individual* cases? The outward man, as well as the inward, is often wholly transformed by religion. When it dominates in a man's soul, the face takes on not only a new and diviner expression, but often even a new cast. The refining and purifying process going on in the inward moral feelings, finds its counterpart in the outward habits and condition of the body. Godliness is physical cleanliness, physical refinement and gentleness of manners; physical elevation, and trend toward perfectness. The two natures, the two kingdoms—the moral and the physical—will be brought into harmony, into a holy and perfect fellowship—in the Future, under the redeeming, purifying, and restorative reign of grace and holiness. "Righteousness" is to characterize the "new earth," as well as the "new heavens." That is, it will be a perfect, a complete, a glorious physical creation, "without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing"—in full accord with God's moral kingdom, and a fitting counterpart of it Never more to feel the effects of sin, or minister to human guilt and misery; but to bask forever in the sunlight of God's love, and be a perpetual peace and blessedness.

And this purification, this reconstruction, this final perfectness of the physical universe, is intimately connected with CHRIST'S REDEMPTION; indeed it is a part of it: as nature felt the shock when Adam sinned, when angels rebelled, so will it feel the touch of His renovating, new-creating power. The resurrection of the physical body of man is a type of that broader, and, if possible, grander resurrection which will take place all over the universe, or at least so far as the ravages of sin have extended. The Creator's "curse" will be taken off, save where "the devil and his angels" are imprisoned. And the whole creation will shine with a beauty, a freshness, and a glory, new and dazzling. So will it be with the resurrected bodies of the saints in glory. They will "be like unto Christ's own glorious body;" and so will be superior, in every way, to the original creation in Eden. And what glowing descriptions have we of the physical life of heaven! The hand of Christ is seen there in every aspect, in every feature, in every arrangement; and the moral beauty and dignity of Christ are reflected in it all. "I go to prepare a place for you," says

Christ to his disciples. Yes, *Christ himself prepares it*, and prepares it specially for his redeemed people—*for you*, "that where *I* am, there *ye* may be also." And what "a place" will that be, under the hand of such a Builder! What "a place" will that be, where Christ, the King of Glory, the exalted and eternal Son of God is to dwell forever, and dwell in the midst of the splendid trophies of his victorious grace! We can conceive of no material display of beauty, and loveliness, and perfection, that can equal the everlasting abode of the Redeemer, and his Redeemed Family.

And the same Hand will be seen and felt over *every* part of "the new heavens, and the new earth." As "Righteousness and Peace" are to be the characteristics of the *spiritual* Kingdom of the Future, as the fruit of Christ's mediatorial administration, so "righteousness" or perfection, "peace," harmony, glory, are to be the distinguishing characteristics of the future *physical* Kingdom, and from the same cause. And what a Kingdom will that be, when the two are conjoined! What a blissful Eternity will crown and reward the Work of the "One Mediator!"

APPENDIX.

SECTION 1.

[SEE PAGE 29 OF THE TEXT.]

PROF. HENRY B. SMITH, THE IDEAL TEACHER.

SEVERAL years have quickly passed since this noble toiler fell asleep. But, "being dead he yet speaketh;" and it is because of his testimony—the testimony of his character, and the testimony of his teaching—the former so Christlike, and the latter so supremely loyal to the "truth as it is in Jesus"—that I venture this additional reference to him, and to the character of his teachings. Although his life was cut short, it was yet a life unusually rich in fruitage. He was a rare gift to the Church at large—for such a character belongs to no one denomination, or school of faith, but is an inheritance to the universal catholic Church; and his death in the prime of his years, and in the exalted sphere in which Providence had placed him, was an irreparable loss, not only to the institution which he so long adorned and enriched by his labors, but also to the cause of Christian learning and ministerial education.

It was my great privilege to be associated with him, for nine years, in the editorship of the "Presbyterian Review," and I was called to fill his place, after his lamented death, in conducting the "Presbyterian Quarterly and Princeton Review."

Brought thus into intimate contact with him in relation to the leading subjects of current thought and discussion in the religious world, I had rare opportunities to study his character, and to mark and measure his extraordinary gifts and attainments. And my admiration of him, as a man, a Christian, a scholar, a thinker, a master of philosophy, increased year by year, until his mind finally gave way under a strain that nothing short of supernatural strength could

long endure. And, although he rallied and did good service for a few years more, yet the great work of his life was done.

His modesty and childlike simplicity of character were truly charming. There was no parade of learning, no pride of philosophy, no assertion of superior wisdom, no sham profundity in his modes of reasoning or teaching. No reader or student of his—in the class-room, or from any of his writings—ever got a wrong bias from him, or had so much as a doubt suggested in reference to the inspiration, or authenticity, or infallibility of the Scriptures. His reverence for and homage to them were simply grand. His loyalty to the truth, to his Divine Master, and to his own mature and enlightened convictions, was something sublime. There was no vagueness, no uncertainty, in his theology, but a clear-cut and sharply-defined conception and statement. There was no mysticism, no vague or rash theorizing, no high-sounding, meaningless phrases, no "glittering generalities," no virus of German Rationalistic thought, in anything he ever wrote for the public, or uttered from the professor's chair. A master of German literature; conversant with its schools of philosophical and theological speculation, and personally intimate with many leading German scholars, it is remarkable that no taint of any evil influence is apparent in his religious belief, or even in his style, which remained singularly pure and vigorous to the last. He culled from every field of knowledge. The range of his reading and studies was well-nigh limitless. But he gathered nothing trifling, nothing noxious, nothing that he could not lay upon the altar of Christian faith, and in some way use in his life's consecrated work.

A more *conscientious* man, in literary matters, I never knew. And this element of his character restrained him in the use of his pen, and limited his writings to a comparatively narrow compass. I mean as to *quantity;* for the breadth, the range, the comprehensiveness, of his writings, are truly wonderful. In this respect he had no superior, and few, if any, equals; as his twenty-seven Review articles, and a thousand crowded pages of Criticisms on Books, and Literary and Theological intelligence, gleaned from the entire range of the world's literature, abundantly demonstrate, to say nothing of his Lectures on Theology. He was nineteen years connected with the "Review," as editor or associate editor; and yet in all those years he wrote but twenty-seven papers! He abstained from writing, even in the pages under his immediate control, on any question or topic that he had not prepared himself, by patient study and original investigation, to discuss intelligently and profitably to his readers. In this respect, his example, as in many other matters, was worthy of warm commendation. No pressure brought to bear upon

him could ever induce him to swerve from this purpose. I often suggested to him subjects, in the line of his studies, and on which I knew his mind was at work, which would be timely, and none could handle better, and which I desired to have discussed in the *Quarterly*, but the uniform reply was, "I am not yet ready. I am thinking about it. Some of these days I hope to feel competent to make the attempt." For several years prior to his death, he had contemplated a paper of vital moment to religion and true science, in relation to which a fierce conflict of opinion was then, and is still, raging. He was anxious to write upon it. He was master of the literature of it. He had pondered and studied it in all its phases, conditions, and relations, near and remote, and yet he died without giving to the world the contribution I had so long coveted. The ministerial brethren who listened to his remarks on "Evolution," the last time he met with them, are prepared to appreciate the eminent service he would have rendered to Christian science, had he been spared to make his "powerful answer to the later utterances of the materialistic school." And it was not indolence, or lack of courage, or definite convictions, that held him back; but a high sense of responsibility in making the attempt, and a due estimate of the qualities and conditions requisite to a proper and profitable discharge of the self-assumed task. He felt deeply—and would that the feeling were common—that it is better not to discuss a grave subject of this character at all, than to discuss it in a flippant and crude, or superficial and incompetent manner.

I challenge the critic, in any of these contributions and lectures—traversing as they do, not only Theology, in all its vast range of facts, doctrines, and historical symbols, but also the human intellect, in its immense scope of investigations, and "limitations of thought," and the moral philosophies of the ages, and some of the most difficult and important questions of his time, practical and ecclesiastical—I challenge the critic to produce a single sentiment, a single position, a single paragraph, that can give "aid and comfort" to the enemies of Christianity; or one to wound the feelings of the humblest Christian believer, or offend the Christian philosopher—one even doubtful in construction, in reference to evangelical truth, or a godly life. It is scarcely possible to bestow higher praise on any public teacher and writer, especially in a day like the present. And yet, with what singular meekness and modesty did he habitually demean himself!

Would that I could reproduce some of his grand Review articles, which never failed to attract attention. But space will only allow brief reference to a few of them. Not the least remarkable of them

is the one covering about seventy pages, and written in the dark hour of our civil strife, entitled: "British Sympathy in America."* It is specially a review of the utterances of *The North British Review*—the organ of the Free Church of Scotland—in regard to the North. Where—if anywhere on the face of the earth, we had a claim for sympathy, and a fair and friendly treatment in such a controversy—we got only reproach, bitter denunciation, and a grossly unjust presentation and arguing of the case against us. Stung to the quick, by what he regarded as almost unparalleled perfidy and injustice, Prof. Smith took up the gauntlet thus thrown down, and made the most eloquent and logical, exhaustive and triumphant vindication of the policy and justice of our cause that the rebellion produced. To say that, when the clash of arms had ceased, the enemy was nowhere visible—routed, driven from the field in dishonor and irretrievable defeat—would be to use very mild language. We know not which to admire most in this sharp conflict—the persistent and irresistible logic of the writer, assailing and driving his antagonist from point to point, until not a solitary defense remains to him; or, his impassioned eloquence and patriotic enthusiasm, which, rising to the majesty of his subject and the occasion, swept on and on with gathering force to the end, raining red-hot shot on the discomfited foe. We have reason to know that his labor was not in vain. It reached and influenced many leading minds on the other side of the water; notably such men as John Stuart Mill, the reflecting political economist; and John Bright, the noble Quaker. The former makes honoring mention of this article in one of his works.

The review of "Draper's Intellectual Development of Europe" is highly characteristic of the writer. The reader may recall with what a flourish of trumpets this work was introduced to the public, and with what apparent ease and self-complacency the distinguished author solved one of the profoundest problems of human destiny. Ignoring, either by design or through ignorance, the elaborate researches and speculations of Schelling and Hegel, of Comte and Buckle, of Condorcet and Guizot, and of many others, who had striven to grasp and exhibit the "rationale and the end of human progress," the reviewer proceeds to demonstrate the falsity of the main propositions of the author, the lack of originality in his theories, and the amazing superficiality and audacity exhibited in the pretentious book. Almost in disdain he says: "A man who can write a history of the 'Intellectual Development of Europe,' and

* "American Theological Review," July, 1862.

say nothing of the systems of Descartes, Malebranche, and Spinoza; pass over Leibneitz and Kant with a word or two; utterly neglect Fichte, Schelling and Hegel; not to refer to Cousin, and pass by in silence Reid, Stewart, Mill, and Hamilton, must have a very singular notion of the task he has set before himself."

"The Limits of Religious Thought"—a review of Mansel's Lectures, delivered before the University of Oxford—furnishes a fine illustration of the reverent spirit and wonderful acumen with which he discussed "the ultimate problems of theological and philosophical speculation." While approving and emphasizing all that is tenable and sound in this very able work, when considered as an argument upon the high question between Christianity and Rationalism, he yet detects and points out in a masterly way the "fatal defects in its exposition of the relations of reason to revelation, or of revelation to rationalism." His contributions on Sir William Hamilton's "Theory of Knowledge," and on John Stuart Mill's "Examination of Hamilton's Philosophy," are worthy of those ablest representatives of the Scottish school of philosophy. They will compare favorably, by any standard of fair judgment, with the productions of these authors themselves, or of their most celebrated disciples. The latter felt that he had a powerful logical antagonist in Prof. Smith. In "Whedon on the Will," the Calvinistic system seldom found an abler expounder, or the Arminian an acuter or more effective opponent. "The Theological System of Emmons" will help the reader to a better understanding and appreciation of that wonderful man. The Criticisms on "Rénan," and on "Strauss," are not surpassed by any of the multitudinous replies which their subtle and audacious attacks on the true Faith called forth, both in this country and abroad; while his remarkable paper on "Presbyterian Reunion" probably contributed more to bring about that consummation than any other single agency.

It is worthy of special note that this profound critic and theologian devoted several of the last years of his life, so far as his health would permit, to a careful and thorough examination of the infidel principles advanced by the latest school of scientists; and also the schools of modern "criticism," which, more or less disguised, and in various forms and degrees, he felt were sapping the very foundations of a supernatural religion. The first work he did not live to complete and write out. The latter he did, to a considerable extent, but left his purposed work unfinished. Still we have enough from his pen on this subject to see the drift of his mind; enough to know what his feelings and fears were. Nay, he rings

out the note of *alarm*, in words which sound to-day like a trumpet-blast. He has put on record his testimony—I may call it his *dying* testimony—for it appears in the very last article he wrote and published, intending to follow it up with another on the same subject. No man was better fitted to judge than he, and we have here his maturest thoughts on the subject. And such testimony, coming from such a source, and at such a juncture as the present, is entitled to great weight. It has also a wider and intenser application at the present moment than when he gave it to the world eight years ago. It sounds in my ear, as I read it now, like a voice from the grave of this true, and valiant, and eminent servant of the Master. Would that the Church he loved so well, and served so grandly, would carefully consider and weigh his words!

This testimony is found in his review articles on Rénan and Strauss, in the "Presbyterian Quarterly and Princeton Review," for 1873 and 1874. I have given one extract from the latter in the chapter on Ministerial Education, and I subjoin another here, which I am sure will command careful and thoughtful reading:—

"For Christianity is not founded in creeds or dogmas. To a certain extent Hume's sarcasm is true, that 'Christianity is not founded in argument.' The facts of our faith antedate its dogmas; the dogmas do not make, but express, the facts. All the human creeds that were ever framed are but partial, fragmentary expressions of the great original—reflected and broken lights of that one light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. The living reality is in historic facts, which have shaped every syllable of the records, and every formula of Christian doctrine.

"Christianity—would that we could see and grasp this vital point!—Christianity is not a creed, not a dogma, not a system of theology, but it is essentially historic fact—a sublime, incarnated, spiritual reality—the most real historic power which, for centuries (in its elements from the very beginning), has controlled the grandest evolution upon the earth—the historic development of the human race. It is as unrivaled and unique in human history as is the sacred Person of its head and centre; it is, as the faith of the Church declares, the living presence of that Person in history itself. The Living Christ stands first and central, and then his apostles, and then the Church, and then the simple creed, and then the canon, and then the conflicts, and then the dogmas, and then the systems of theology, and so on through the centuries: and in and through all a living, spiritual power, comparable only to the life of nature. And last of all come they also who say that its very substance is found in crude and contradictory dogmas, which can be upset by a sneer!

And this Christianity, so sublime as an objective fact, becomes subjectively a renovating power—the life of God in the soul of man—the mysterious consciousness of an unearthly presence in the soul—God in Christ reconciling the world unto himself—the highest form of spiritual life—no more dependent upon theories and critics than is the health of the body upon the speculations of the physiologists and pathologists. And this victorious historic faith, and this internal spiritual conviction, are no more made in the way which such criticism represents, than the life of the earth, or its evolutions, by the theories of geologists and 'scientists.' A state cannot be overthrown by refuting the schemes of publicists, for the state lives and grows by its own law. And Christianity was made by the Maker of history. Those who are constructing and reconstructing it, and attempting to demolish it by refuting some human theories about it, might about as well claim that they can reconstruct and demolish the visible universe by a new theory, which refutes the dogmas of all the speculative world-builders who have gone before. Vast material forces, guided by divine power and wisdom, control the development of the earth; equally vast spiritual forces guide and guard the course of history and the destiny of Christianity. A scheme for its demolishment and reconstruction, drawn up by the new prophets, is quite akin to the political pronunciamentos and paper constitutions of Communists and Internationals—what the latter are to the state the former are to the Church.

"The very law of Evolution itself (at least so far as it has been at all verified) when applied to human history, might at least give as much probability to the further development of Christianity as to its extinction. Christianity has undeniably been evolved in human history, and has in fact largely organized it. It has all the criteria of a development, as these are given by evolutionists themselves—inward force, natural selection, survival of the fittest. Who knows its reserve of might? its latent possibilities? The experience of the past would seem to favor the confident prediction of greater marvels yet to come. Or if, again, evolution may in any case be so far arrested or completed, that it can stop, for example, with man as the summit and acme of creation (which is taken for granted by Strauss and others), then why may it not have reached its height, so far as religion is concerned, in Christianity? If it may carry on man, substantially as he is, to a more perfect development, why not the Christian system also? Who can set bounds to its indefinite possibilities? May it not be so applied as to give a rational conviction, that that august Christian faith, which is by common confession the highest form of religion, may go on conquering and to

conquer? And even now, while it is abandoned by some theorists, dizzied by excess of speculation, and by some 'scientists,' blinded by excess of matter—it is planting its churches at the ends of the earth. What weapon fashioned against it has yet prospered? From what decisive battle-field has as yet gone up any other cry than that memorable one, so true in fact even if of doubtful origin, which went up of old from the defeated, despairing, and expiring heathendom: 'Thou hast conquered, O Galilean!'"*

But I must forbear. Oft did the presence of this good man hallow my office, and the light of his great mind shine like the sun in a dark place. But he is gone now!—he, so ripe for greater usefulness—so full of holy resolves—so intent on high ends—and gone in the maturity of his rare gifts and attainments. On whom has his mantle fallen?

"To him, as to Jacob, the vision of the angels has come. The sleeper has gone away. The ladder and the angels are not for our grosser senses, and the stones are black and bare: but there is still the pillar, the monument of consecrated character, and so it is bright sunshine on the spot where the pilgrim 'tarried for a night,' and we say, as we draw near: 'This is the gate of heaven.'"†

SECTION II.

INSANITY AND MORAL DEPRAVITY

[SEE PAGE 159 OF TEXT.]

STATISTICS show that Insanity is on the increase among us, and in a ratio that may well alarm the reflecting, and challenge public

* July 1874, pp. 281, 282.

† Since the above was in type, the "Introduction to Christian Theology," by Prof. Smith, edited by Dr. Karr of Hartford Seminary, has been published; and it is proposed to follow this work shortly by his complete Theological System. We are sure that this will gladden the hearts of multitudes. While living, Dr. Smith influenced the minds of very many, not only of his students, but in the church at large. And we are sure, judging from what is known of his character and theological views, from his Review writings, from his Class Lectures, and from the remarkable little volume on "Apologetics," published last year, that his Theological System, when it appears, will be regarded as among the most important contributions to theological literature of recent times. There is that in the present tendencies of religious thought and discussion that will give emphasis and timeliness to the mature, scriptural, and masterly statement and vindication of the Christian system by such an acknowledged master in Israel.

attention to the causes which are at work to produce the dreadful infliction. They also suggest the necessity of a thorough scientific investigation of the whole subject. Not only is every individual deeply interested in it, not knowing how soon it may come home to him personally, or to some of his loved ones; but the public as well have a deep interest in it, as it is nearly related to crime, and to personal liberty, and will become a still heavier burden upon the State, if it continue to increase like a contagion.

That it is possible to check the causes which excite or produce it, and in many cases to cure it, or ward it off in its incipient stages, if it come to be thoroughly understood in its mental and moral aspects, cannot be reasonably doubted. At present we have not sufficient data for a scientific analysis of the phenomenon; not even for an intelligent survey of it. Is it not a little surprising that the experience and observation of so many skillful and scientific professional men, who have made the *treatment* of the insane for many years a specialty, have not furnished the data for such an analysis—have not so much as formulated a "theory" respecting it?

What *is* insanity, psychologically considered? Is it a physical, or mental, or moral disease? Is it an evil possession? Is it actually "hereditary," or only seemingly so, under the law of association? Is there a real distinction between mental and moral insanity? What degree of insanity marks the line of irresponsibility? Is it possible for a man to be so seriously insane as to be morally irresponsible, and yet the fact not be known in the circle in which he moves?—not to be clearly traceable in his conduct? Surely professional experience and scientific observation, extending over a multitude of cases and during a long course of years, ought to be able to furnish data for solving, at least, some of these questions. But we are "at sea" still in relation to every one of them, as is made painfully apparent whenever the services of this professional class are called in requisition in our courts of justice.

The relations of physiology, especially mental physiology, to psychology have never been clearly defined or understood. The occult influences which are exerted on the mind to disturb its normal action, impair its judgment, and, through a distempered mental vision, or physical disability, to destroy or suspend the moral sense, have never been made a subject of severe and exhaustive investigation. There is a broad domain here, and one which concerns our entire humanity, which has yet to be traversed. And it lies at the foundation of the whole subject. Our knowledge of insanity, vitally as it concerns us all, will be superficial and limited until this shall be done.

The moral and theological side of insanity has never received the attention which its importance demands. The chief factors concerned in producing it, I am satisfied, are not mental or physical in character, so much as moral and spiritual. Sin in the human heart, and Satanic agency, as a malign, disturbing, destructive force, acting on a darkened mind, both directly, and through a depraved moral disposition and on the laws of nature, enter largely into the subject; and insanity can never be intelligently or properly understood while they are ignored.

Sin, in the Scriptures, is represented as "darkness," both in a moral and an intellectual sense. "Madness is in their heart," Eccl. 9 : 3—the madness of sin. The condition of a mind alienated from God, hating the truth, and shutting his eyes against its light; and environed and beset by evil moral influences and agents, is certainly a condition highly favorable to insanity. In other words, there is an intimate connection between *moral* insanity—the natural state of unregenerate manhood—and *mental* insanity. A guilty passion indulged easily overmasters the mind, and destroys or suspends, for the time being, its functions. An outburst of anger will instantly craze a man and turn him into a maniac, and crimson his soul with the guilt of murder. And an appetite for spirituous liquor, indulged to excess, destroys the faculty of reason in man, and the power of self-control, and makes the spirit of madness dominant in his soul, and wholly disqualifies him to act the part of a moral agent. The habitual inebriate, certainly, is not a sane man, and does not act the part of a sane man, when he deliberately sells his liberty, and sacrifices his manhood, his reputation, his soul, and the happiness and welfare of wife and children, for strong drink, and persists in this course in spite of all remonstrance and entreaty, until the work of self-ruin is complete, knowing all the time that such will be the certain and terrible end. Is it any the less an act of *suicide*, because the process is a slower one than by the use of pistol or razor? It were far better, at least for his family, and for society, that he make quick work of it, rather than prolong for years the shame and agony and horrible spectacle. And so of sin in every form. Moral depravity in its essence contains all the elements of insanity. They only need to be excited, and inflamed, and have the occasion furnished, by occurring providences, or by evil spirits, to burst forth with uncontrollable violence. It is only a question of *degree* with irreligious men—with all men in whom the spirit and law of moral evil predominate. "The moral insanity of irreligious men" is the striking title of a published sermon by the late Dr. Ide. There is a profound Scripture truth expressed in the title. The habitual condition of every man in

whom the law and grace of God are not the reigning force; of every man who gives the reins to evil passions and wicked principles, is such, that, under a strong, sudden pressure, either from within or without, from his own "evil heart of unbelief" or criminal passion, stirred up by some unwonted exciting cause, or by Satanic influence, Insanity may suddenly stalk forth like "a strong man armed," and be master of the situation. The more one yields to the blinding and demoralizing influence of intellectual error and moral guilt, the more does he lose the liberty of self-control and come under the domination of that Evil Power, which is the very incarnation of all mischief and wickedness, and which is ever busy in building up the kingdom of iniquity, and misery and ruin, in the world.

For one, I am satisfied, from long observation, and from a recent personal experience, that too much stress is laid on the merely mental and physical aspects of insanity. Physiology, and even mental psychology, I suspect, has comparatively little to do in exciting or developing it. It is not conditioned, we believe, except in rare cases, on an abnormal state of the brain. An abnormal condition of the brain has never been proved even in "hereditary" cases. The virus and the exciting causes are not so much in the intellect, or in the brain, regarded as the organ of it, as in the moral nature of man, and the evil and tremendous agency to which he is continually exposed, in a world where sin everywhere prevails, and the Prince of darkness holds sway. I apprehend that insanity would cease to afflict and distress our race, if the moral nature of man were universally regenerated by the Spirit of God, and the world were freed from the presence and power of the "Devil and his angels." The only radical preventive or cure for insanity is the Religion of the Lord Jesus Christ; the restoration of the race to moral virtue; the overthrow of Satan's power in the world, and the reign of peace and love in the human heart.

SECTION III.

THE EVIL OF BLINDLY FOLLOWING "AUTHORITIES."

[SEE PAGE 54 OF THE TEXT.]

IN my youth I was intimate with a young physician residing in the neighborhood of my home. He was quite above the average

country physician in natural gifts, education, and professional attainments. He belonged to a family of physicians; his father, an uncle, and a brother belonging to the same profession—the two latter eminent in rank—the brother recently deceased in this city, after a long career of distinguished success. He was my father's family physician, and also the physician of my relatives and friends in all that region. He was remarkably attentive to his practice, conscientious, and anxious to succeed.

There was fearfully prevalent, at that time, in the circle of his practice, a peculiar type of consumption, which swept into early graves a large number from the immediate circle of my relations and friends, and he was the attending physician. The symptoms, also, in many of the cases, were singularly alike. And it so happened that I myself (then some seventeen years of age) had an attack similar to what the others had experienced (my sister had recently died of the disease.) My friend was called in to attend me. He drew out his lancet and prepared to bleed me.

"Stop, doctor," I said, "you will not bleed me. I have no blood to spare."

"Then, James, you will most likely die," was his brief response.

"Well, I might as well die in the natural way, if I must die, as under the lancet."

His arguments, and even the tears of my mother, failed to move me from my purpose.

He left me, and I recovered; and now, at "three score and ten," I am writing these lines.

Many years after I met him at the house of an uncle residing in my native town. Two of my cousins had died there, in the bloom of youth, and he had attended both of them.

In talking over the past, he suddenly inquired, with solemnity of manner: "Do you remember the scenes which occurred in this house?"

"I do; I can never forget them. Did I not watch by the bedside of one of them till he died; and do I not know, doctor, that you hurried him out of the world by your mode of treatment?"

"Yes, I believe it," he said, "and if I had had my way when called to you, you would have been in your grave a long while ago!"

"I believe you," I responded. "And now, doctor, I want to ask you one plain question: *Why did you persevere* in your course of treatment, when fatal results followed in so many instances? You thought me obstinate and self-willed, I know, when I refused to submit to your practice; but it was not obstinacy in me, but an

intelligent conviction, young as I was. I knew nothing about medicine, as a theory, and was mainly ignorant of medical authorities; but I had carefully watched the effect of your treatment in my father's family, and noting the frequent fatal results among my acquaintances, I was satisfied that your system of treatment was contrary to nature, and opposed to the principles of sound medical science. The fruits of my observation and reasoning, based upon it, were better than all your 'authorities.' Do you not think so yourself? And how could you follow blindly a dogma, 'authorities,' when you saw where it would be likely to lead your patients, who intrusted their lives to your keeping?"

The answer was a right manly one—and a truly worthy man he was, for whom I had and continue to have great esteem.

"I *then* knew no other way. The course I pursued was the only one laid down in 'the books.' It was that or nothing. But I have lived to see the error of my way, and no longer blindly follow authorities."

The *moral* of this incident is patent. What is the faculty for observation, and judgment based on observation, given to us for, if we are not to use them, and use them wisely and effectively? God has endowed us with few gifts, diviner in quality, or as a means of higher wisdom and usefulness. And yet, in all the professions, in all the walks of life, this "law unto ourselves" is to a great extent ignored. "Authorities" have done more to stifle free inquiry and independent thought, and to choke practical wisdom, and handicap common sense, than almost any other thing.

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